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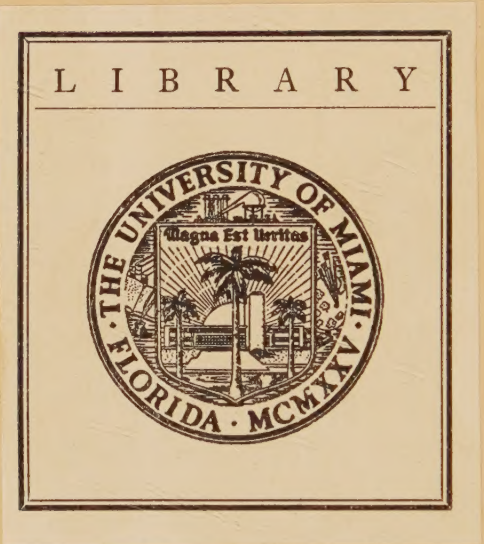

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THE MARQUIS BONI DE CASTELLANE BY DRIAN

HOW I DISCOVERED AMERICA

Confessions of

THE MARQUIS BONI DE CASTELLANE

NEW YORK ALFRED · A · KNOPF MCMXXIV

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CHAPTER I

In the Spring of 1894, Destiny, Chance, or what you will, threw me across the path of Anna Gould, the greatest heiress of the day, the woman who later was to become my wife, the mother of my children, and my Light that Failed.

Miss Gould was staying in Paris with Miss Fanny Read, a strange individual, whose social recognition was chiefly due to her relationship with the beautiful Mrs. Arthur Paget.

Fanny Read was reputed to have once been beautiful, but, as I never met anyone old enough to remember her in the heyday of her fame, I am not in a position to verify the statement. When I knew her she was certainly not beautiful, and her face was only redeemed from mediocrity by a prominent nose. She received a curious set of people in her flat in the Rue de la Trémoille, but she had acquired social fame by reason of her chaperonage of the rich American girl, whose arrival in Paris had occasioned a furore. Gossip credited Miss Gould with the possession of boundless wealth; she was worth milliards instead of millions, and there was likewise much speculation as to her matrimonial future.

In this way Fanny Read had the greatness of the Goulds thrust on her, as *tout Paris*, myself included, frequented her *salons*, desiring the better acquaintance of her interesting visitor.

I was not a favourite with Miss Read. She disliked my mode of enjoying life, and my "unusualness" constituted a criticism of her own dull scheme of existence. Nevertheless, so complex are the ways of Fate, Fanny Read alone was respon-

sible for my introduction to Anna Gould, and in my life story she figures as the architect of my destiny.

Fanny Read believed herself to be a singer, and, indeed, she occasionally managed (with infinite pains) to extract a few notes. These vocal performances terrorized her guests, who were devoutly thankful when Fanny Read's tired top-notes and her tired piano ceased from troubling them.

On this particular Spring afternoon, Fanny had out-Heroded Fanny and, seeing me solitary, she asked me whether I would care to be introduced to her little friend Anna, who was holding a sort of miniature court at the extreme end of the *salon.* I assented, and found myself in the charmed circle surrounding the girl who was soon to play such an important part in my future. The heiress was short and slightly built, with the tiniest hands and feet and black eyes.

Miss Read had been given *carte blanche* by the Goulds in the selection of Anna's outfit, but her taste was non-existent; and she forced her guest to wear gowns suitable for a much older person. To-day, Anna was arrayed in a confection of grey *crêpe de Chine,* while her chaperone was resplendent in *broché* satin, and had entwined pink and blue ribbons in the faded glories of her hair.

My name did not appear to make much impression on Miss Gould. She smiled, and seemed rather pleased to meet a Frenchman who could speak English, but when she presented me to the Prince of Battenberg she called me "Castillon" instead of "Castellane." I ventured to correct the mistake, and she apologized in the most charming and naïve fashion, and, the ice thus broken, we began to talk and seemed to be in a fair way of becoming friends. I confess that I found her an interesting study, and it was soon apparent that she found me a pleasant companion. She was utterly unlike the modern American girl. She gave one the impression of being excessively

shy, she was childish, and a trifle malicious; but she possessed charm, and—what is always delightful to a man—possibilities. I thought that it would be most fascinating to complete her education in the best finishing-school—marriage—and afterwards to present her to an admiring world.

Shortly after our meeting, Miss Gould introduced me to her brother George, who had come to Paris with his wife, in order to satisfy himself as to his sister's progress. This was the first time that I had ever been cheek by jowl with millionaires from the New World, and I was curious to see what they were like in private life. But once again my imagination played me false. The Goulds were in no wise remarkable as individuals, or as representatives of a super-moneyed class.

George, however, was an intriguing personality. One sensed instinctively that his mask-like demeanour was assumed at will. Subsequent events have proved my estimate of his character to be correct. He was richer than the rest of his family, his father having given George several more millions when he constituted him guardian of his younger brothers and sisters.

Miss Anna Gould spent much of her time with Mrs. George Gould, a pretty woman who was clever enough to understand how to manage her husband and, in many ways, to influence him. It was amusing to watch Mrs. Gould "considering" George, her jade-green eyes seeming to hold a note of perpetual interrogation in their cold depths. My tactics were successful, and the whole family and myself were on the best of terms, but when the George Goulds returned to America, they again left their sister under the chaperonage of Fanny Read!

I was really sorry for Anna; she was as wax in the experienced hands of an unpleasant woman and one, moreover, whom I knew to be antagonistic towards me. This knowledge aroused my fighting spirit, and I determined to carry the warfare of love into the enemy's camp. I therefore paid assidu-

ous court to her; I passed under her windows on horseback, I wrote to her several times, I sent her Persian lilac. The roses bloomed for her. Her feet trod on a carpet of flowers.

In justice to myself, I can honestly affirm that Miss Gould's fortune played a secondary part in her attraction for me. She was, in many respects, unusual—and the unusual has always fascinated me! I was never a fortune-hunter, and although I shall probably be given the lie, I can only repeat, and urge in my defence, what is perfectly true, that during the twelve years of my married life I never attempted to feather my nest at the expense of my wife. True, I spent her millions, but, as I shall endeavour to prove, I have actually represented a more than profitable investment for her.

My understanding of the heart of woman told me that absence constitutes the best for affection, so I decided to leave Paris and betake myself to London, *en route* for America, there to complete my conquest of this charming Daughter of the New World. . . . I felt certain that Anna would not remain long in Paris without me, and I was right. Within the next two months, she had sailed for America.

I stayed in London under the happiest conditions; I was asked everywhere, and—unforgettable memory!—I met the Marchioness of Ripon, then Lady de Grey. This splendid woman embodied in herself all the best traditions of her nationality, and her beauty was something to wonder at. She swayed through life like a tall white lily, she was eminently gracious, and she knew exactly how to preserve the right balance between Bohemia and society. "I have passed my life between Princes and Tenors," she once said, and she spoke truly. Lady Ripon encouraged music, musicians and artists on the lines of a princess of the Italian Renaissance in a way that no other Englishwoman has ever succeeded in imitating, although Lady

Cunard has proved herself her not unworthy follower. Lady Ripon will remain immortal!

I also renewed my acquaintance with Minna, Marchioness of Anglesey, who was staying with her friend, Princess Doria. The Marchioness, who represents one of the most interesting personalities of her day, is perhaps better known in Parisian society than in that of London, and she has been able to transform herself into an aristocrat worthy of the Court of the Sun King. She looks the part, and plays it to perfection. One associates her beauty with the era of brocade, powder and lace, just as her keen wit belongs to the same period.

The Marchioness was fully aware of the Parisian gossip which had already coupled my name with that of Anna Gould, and one afternoon, with characteristic candour, she asked me my intentions.

"I can read you, Boni, as easily as an open book," said she. "You look so self-satisfied that you must be excessively pleased with yourself. Come, own up! Have you decided to marry Anna Gould?"

I made no reply . . . and my friend continued:

"Listen. You don't understand Americans. You never will. Take my advice, and give up your idea of marrying one."

Nothing annoys a young man more than to be treated like a boy. Lady Anglesey had evidently forgotten that I was twenty-seven! "I think I am quite capable of understanding and appreciating Miss Gould," I said somewhat crossly.

"Oh, dear no," answered the irrepressible Marchioness. "If I were in your place, I should certainly be more circumspect. Cannot you realize that Anna Gould's soft exterior hides a will of iron? She is essentially the child of her father."

"Well, iron can always be wrought by the hand of a connoisseur . . . it can also melt . . . and, like Vulcan, I know how to handle iron," I said, with intense meaning.

Lady Anglesey looked at me without speaking. She was evidently displeased, although her anger was not devoid of pity. No doubt she had made her own matrimonial plans for Anna! "Well, Boni," said she, shrugging her graceful shoulders, "you are a very foolish young man, but somehow I can't help liking you."

My friend did not reopen the subject, and a few days afterwards I went with her and Princess Doria to Knole. This was my first introduction to a historic English estate. Knole filled me with admiration, and I was astonished at the multiplicity of its treasures. Lord Sackville's daughter Victoria acted as our *cicerone,* and her accurate knowledge of art and antiques, allied to the real spirit of a connoisseur, has been since recognized by dealers with world-wide reputations. Lady Sackville (as she is now) appeared to live only for Knole, and how indissoluble she was from it has been proved by her marriage with her cousin, the present owner.

Some of my most interesting memories of this time gather round the late Lord Salisbury. I had always wished to meet him, for his reputation for perspicacity was well known and appreciated in France. Lord Salisbury was indeed one of England's immortals, and he gave me the impression that through his profound knowledge of the Past he was enabled to read the Future in the Present!

He it was who invariably predicted that if England were ever drawn into a world war it would be with Germany, and not with Russia, and, in support of his views, he cited the reasons which rendered it unnecessary to fear Russia. I was already devoted to politics, and I often speculated as to the fate of Austria; I felt sure that the Habsburgs were already doomed, and Lord Salisbury shared my views. On April 10, 1878, when he was acting as Minister of Foreign Affairs, he wrote to his Ambassador in Vienna: "She [Austria] has recently shown lament-

able weakness and a lack of confidence in herself, and this absence of sincerity and belief is a proof of her internal weakness. In fact it makes one apprehensive that any unforeseen events in the south-east of Europe might easily suffice to disintegrate this badly consolidated Empire."

Lord Salisbury, the wonderful statesman, was indeed a typical Grand Seigneur! His massive leonine head would have enraptured Michael Angelo, and, full of the fire of hero-worship, I was prepared to treasure every word uttered by him.

He was a conversational disillusion: perhaps he underestimated my intelligence! All that he spoke about was a *contre-temps* with a watering-can which he had upset over his feet that very morning, and his fears that in consequence he would inevitably suffer from a cold in the head. He had quite forgotten Austria for the time being!

Mrs. Arthur Paget who, notwithstanding her blood-relationship to Fanny Read, was one of the most charming women imaginable, showed me many kindnesses during my stay in England, and one evening I had the honour of meeting the late King Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, at her house.

The heir apparent, was, as is well known, invariably punctual, but I wondered whether he appreciated the rather lugubrious music with which Mrs. Paget apparently purposed to welcome him. The Prince of Wales, who did not attempt to ascertain the whereabouts of the musicians, remained downstairs with a few friends, and Mrs. Paget, aware of my admiration for him, suggested that I should be deeply sensible of the honour of being presented.

The Prince expressed his willingness, and I was ushered into the Royal Presence, full of interest, excitement and, as befitted my upbringing, respect for the representative of a great monarchy. My first impression of the Prince of Wales was one of mingled simplicity and dignity. His simplicity amazed me,

as the personality of any heir apparent had been hitherto imagined by me on the traditions of our own dauphins. I recalled the pomp and circumstances inseparable from even the domesticities of our kings; the guard of honour whenever they appeared, the pealing of bells, and the retinue of courtiers, and I contrasted all that with this unceremonious reception, which, for all its lack of ceremony, was nevertheless dignified.

I saw a tall, strongly built man, with a long nose and rather prominent eyes peculiar to the Guelphs and Coburgs, a man whom one could not describe as strictly handsome, but whose sweet expression and air of distinction marked him as belonging to a race apart. His voice was grave, but when he spoke to his friends the gravity was tempered by little gusts of laughter. The Prince was pre-eminently a man of the world, above all—a King.

King Edward VII possessed none of the artistic sense peculiar to some of the present descendants of the House of Coburg, and so highly developed in his father, the Prince Consort, who speedily became the domesticated married man after his *entrée* into English life. His sons were never quite able to dissociate themselves from Victorian traditions, but in the case of Edward VII an impossibly strict upbringing resulted in the pendulum swinging in an opposite direction when the one-time pupil became his own master. I am sure that the secret of Edward VII's undying popularity with the masses lies in the fact that he enjoyed "seeing life" so thoroughly.

The illustrious guest of the evening received me graciously, saying, as he shook hands: "I knew your parents well in Paris, and I am pleased to see you in England. I hope you are enjoying your visit." The Prince questioned me as to various mutual acquaintances and, bidding me a smiling *au revoir*, he went upstairs with his hostess. As he passed to the ball-room, where supper was served, the guests lined up on

either side, and then took their seats at the numerous little tables.

Mrs. Paget knew that food served on small tables, with a few kindred spirits to enjoy it, tastes infinitely better than in the formal *mise-en-scène* of a banquet, and I was engaged in proving the truth of her theory, when I heard my name pronounced rather contemptuously by a pretty woman at the next table. She and her friends were unaware of my identity, and I had the mixed joy of hearing myself discussed as a real, yet withal a mythical individual by people who knew nothing about me, but who considered themselves completely justified in destroying my reputation. According to them, I was a young profligate, and a Parisian ne'er-do-well.

"And," resumed the first speaker, "it is almost certain that he will eventually marry Anna Gould."

"My dear lady," said a gentleman of the party, a well-known club man without whose dull presence, and equally monotonous wedding-present, no society marriage would be well and truly solemnized, "take it from me, this girl will never be silly enough to accept a man who is foolish enough to want to marry *her*."

CHAPTER II

I ENJOYED my visit to England, but, like most worth-while adventures, it had proved expensive. From my salad days I have always had a flair for entertaining, and my hospitable instincts constantly prompted me to invite my English friends to lunch and dine with me at the Amphitryon Club, then existent in Bond Street.

Restaurant life in London had not then assumed the serious part that it now plays, and the Englishman's home was still his castle, a stronghold of indigestion, lengthy luncheons and heavy dinners.

With us, the *restaurant de luxe* is inseparable from the social scheme, and it must also be borne in mind that cooking has been raised to the level of a fine art by the French, whereas in England it represents a more or less domestic function, and in consequence very few English people know how to enjoy their food. But Londoners excel in one particular feature. The cuisine, at the best London Clubs, *is* the best, and it is even better than when I first made its acquaintance. At the present time, there is hardly any private entertaining—everyone flocks to smart hotels, where one hears the Jews enjoying soup, and watches the smart world trying to amuse itself. Dancing and dining are inseparable; nothing is thought out; the dishes are usually mediocre. The day of the epicure is over.

Nevertheless, in spite of the heavy meals and monotonous cuisine, I experienced many real regrets in leaving London.

But, sad to relate, I was hard up. I had, so to speak, exceeded the speed limit, and a few hundred francs alone remained to me after I had booked my passage to New York.

I have always placed implicit faith in my Star, and I have never been troubled with doubts as to my course. In the days of my youth, therefore, I emulated the example of the lilies of the field, certain that Heaven would never forsake me. And when one is young, and drinks eagerly of the wine of life, it is impossible not to hope for and desire the best.

The first part of the passage was made in splendid weather. After dinner we sat in our deck-chairs talking, flirting or reading, as the case might be. For my own part, I preferred to read, and I had brought with me my beloved *Méditations sur l'Evangile,* Carlyle's works, and *Les Origines de la France Contemporaine.*

Bossuet's *Méditations* especially appealed to me, and one evening I resorted to an old-time form of divination, using religious philosophy as the Oracle of my Destiny. My *modus operandi* in casting the runes is very simple: it consists in opening a book at hazard and placing my finger on any part of a page, closing my eyes whilst so doing. On this occasion, I chanced upon the explanation (according to Bossuet) of the Gospel for the fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

" 'Take no thought for the morrow.' This will not prevent you from thinking and working in moderation, but it will prevent you from experiencing needless mental worry. On no account allow trivial matters to trouble you. And," continued the worthy Bishop of Meaux, "think how you live, and how your body is nourished. Can you add one inch to your stature? But when you are sleeping, God nourishes you, and from a child you grow into a man. Place your entire faith in the Almighty, and trust in his power and in His loving-kindness."

I reflected that this was indeed a comforting assurance, but the very next day I was confronted with a glimpse of the grim realities of life. A thick sea fog suddenly swept over the face of the waters, and all at once a violent impact told us that we had collided with something unseen. We were not mistaken: a French sailing-ship had, unfortunately, crossed our track, and it was instantly cut in two. The sirens hooted, boats were lowered, and the alarmed passengers crowded on deck. It was a nerve-shattering experience, and I shall never forget the sinister and impenetrable veil of fog, from out of which issued cries of distress, impossible to locate! It was some time before confidence was restored and we were able to continue our journey.

But the merciless ocean had taken its toll of human lives. Some of the crew of the sailing-vessel had perished, and the rescued were in a pitiable state of exhaustion. One sailor died the same evening, and I witnessed that most lonely and pathetic interment, a burial at sea. Never shall I forget the impression produced on me as the poor body, sewn in sail-cloth, and weighted with lead, passed rapidly from our sight into the mysterious depths of the ocean, there to be the prey of strange and cruel monsters of the deep, the sport of currents and storms, and deprived of its last resting-place in the kindly arms of Mother Earth. What a lesson of *omnia vanitas* for a light-hearted young man who had embarked on an amorous adventure!

A collection was made on behalf of the survivors, and I contributed every penny I had in the world. Had I not Bossuet's assurance that all would be well for those who took no thought for the morrow?

I arrived in the New World, therefore, penniless. Indeed, I was so hard up that my cab-fare from the landing-stage was charged to my account at the Waldorf-Astoria. But I was

nowise disconcerted, as mingled with my religious convictions was a streak of cynicism, which bid me remember the quaint old saying that the devil is credited with being kindly disposed towards his special protégés, and also that the greater the sowing, the greater the harvest!

My star was certainly in the ascendant, as, on my arrival, my good friend Charles Raoul Duval put me at once in the way of making money, and I had no cause to worry over the immediate future.

I was unfavourably impressed by my first sight of New York, and the horrible Statue of Liberty might have justified Mme. Roland's historic exclamation: "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" The city itself gave me the idea of extreme disproportion, and the skyscrapers on either side of the Hudson River seemed to have been built by a race of Titans. *Au reste*, I chiefly noticed an ugly, greasy, dirty environment, in which everything appeared to be worked by machinery.

No sooner had I set foot in the Waldorf-Astoria than I was literally besieged by reporters, and in this way I became acquainted with the piratical and mendacious methods of the super-sensational American press, the most powerful and unscrupulous force in the New World.

There was, not unnaturally, a tremendous amount of curiosity concerning the reasons for my visit to America, especially as some rather malicious gossip had already preceded me. As I was aware of this, I considered that it behoved me to be prudent, and at first I politely refused to be "drawn." This attitude irritated the group of expectant pressmen, and one, bolder than the rest, exclaimed:

"Say, Boni, are you going to speak or shall we speak for you?" and, as I did not answer, he added maliciously: "Thank goodness, there's no law of libel here, and the press is as free as Old Glory."

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This decided me. I had no wish to be misrepresented or misquoted, and I gave the reporters a few veracious details about myself and my *raisons d'être.* This apparently satisfied them, but it is needless to say that when the "interviews" appeared, I was credited with saying all that I had *not* said, and no notice whatever was taken of my expressed opinions.

The pressmen, however, had their uses, and through them I gained some intimate information concerning the antecedents of the Goulds. They were, it appeared, of Scotch descent, and Jay Gould had founded the family fortune on a patent mouse-trap, afterwards augmenting his wealth by speculations in railways and cables. In later years, I never thought of that patent mouse-trap without smiling.

But the publicity annoyed me, and besides I was incommoded by the tropical heat of New York, to which I was totally unaccustomed. I reflected, half humorously, that if the devil looked after the welfare of his protégés by suddenly exposing them to a temperature akin to that of his own country, then I must be especially favoured, and I wondered how I was to exist here, or hereafter, in a perpetual vapour-bath.

I left New York as soon as I conveniently could, and went to Newport, where I stayed for six weeks. Faithful as ever to my ancestor-worship, I visited the battlefield where my grand-uncle, the Vice-Admiral de Castellane-Majestre, who fought with La Fayette and Rochambeau in the War of Independence, had discovered that the average American takes little or no interest in any past. He differs widely from Washington and Jefferson, whose religious and simple characters were imbued with ancient philosophy. He lives, perhaps rightly, for the necessities of the present and the possibilities of the future!

Everyone at Newport was most kind and hospitable, and a succession of dinners, fêtes and picnics were given in my honour. I have rarely met more hospitable people than

Americans when they have a motive for hospitality! I was not, however, intrigued by the cuisine with its terrapin, its clam broth and its oyster crabs, neither was I overwhelmed by the methods of entertaining. If spending money to excess constitutes a claim to success, many Americans can lay claim to it, and if a lavish display of gold and silver plate makes for happiness, many American hostesses must exist in a perpetual Utopia.

I have made the rather enlightening discovery, apropos of American cuisine, that all imported French *chefs* are spoilt as soon as they work in the United States. At one house where I visited, the *chef* had formerly been in the service of my grandmother, and, knowing the family, it was not surprising that he begged to be allowed to pay his respects to me. Permission being granted, he drew me aside, and whispered what was, in his opinion, a momentous communication.

"M. le Comte," said he, "you won't like the cooking here: it's not what you are accustomed to. Don't, I entreat you, judge me by appearances. You see, I have to please them"—and the unfortunate *chef* indicated his employers by a typically Parisian shrug, expressive of sublime contempt.

After London and Paris, I was unable to understand the sharp contrasts of the United States. Frankly, everything is exaggerated in America: every religious movement is intensified, every phase of life is at high pressure. American existence bears no resemblance to that of other Continents, and the Church of the Old World is supplanted in the New World by the Factory.

Every French village possesses one special building surmounted by a cross, where the inhabitants cluster around their protective Mother like little children. In France the church-tower raises itself as a sanctuary and a sign of peace. In America, the new and arrogant foundries, with their hellish

furnaces, symbolic of unrest, dominate and menace. In the midst of these discrepancies, one often finds an hotel which represents the last word in comfort; and, a little distance away, the palace of a millionaire. This last is probably built in the worst taste, but the owner is hailed as a genius, simply because he happens to have acquired the art of making money!

I was, let me confess it, intensely curious to sample the *mise en scène* which must insensibly have influenced Miss Anna Gould's outlook on life. I was, therefore, much gratified when her brother George invited me to stay at his place on Long Island, a sandy locality reminiscent of the country-side of the Department of the Landes.

George Gould's house had no architectural pretensions whatever: it was built of wood, arranged in scale-like layers, and its deceptive fragility had as a background a few stunted pine-trees. It was a bare, unsightly residence, but the wooden planking was so arranged that currents of warm and cold air afforded an equal temperature in summer and winter, one of the pleasant features of an otherwise curious home.

I found myself at the entrance of a lounge-hall, littered with tennis-racquets, snow-boots, and the flotsam and jetsam of the guests. There were many luxurious leather arm-chairs, where lords of finance were reclining, sipping whiskies-and-sodas, and flirting and joking with the assembled ladies.

The women were, with few exceptions, experienced and entirely blasé. They wore super-expensive ready-made tea-gowns, which positively shrieked "model" at you. I contrasted these garments with the delightful tea-gowns with which I was familiar, those diaphanous creations of chiffon and lace which reveal and yet conceal all that fires the imagination.

The frieze which decorated George Gould's hall was the inspiration of a Spanish artist, and depicted a bullfight much as Spanish life and love are colour-printed on the fans sold at

San Sebastian! From time to time the women would look up at the pictured conflict, and I am sure that each one visualized herself as Carmen, and hummed Carmen's fatal love-warning between her teeth.

High above a monumental chimney-piece, supported by two plaster caryatides, a long dead patrician of another age surveyed the assembled humanity with scornful amusement in her lovely arrogant eyes. This picture of a one-time Duchess of Marlborough, immortalized by Gainsborough, had been acquired by George Gould for an enormous sum. A wide staircase rose from one corner of the hall, the steps strewn with black, white, brown and grey bearskins, and in the left-hand corner a gilded piano made discord in the shadows. This bizarre instrument simulated some sea monster, the lyre-shaped tail of which outspread towards the ceiling: the beast's teeth formed the keys, and the Goulds had dedicated this weird fantasy solely to the interpretation of the works of Leoncavallo and Mascagni!

We dined in a gorgeous room hung with green silk; there we fared sumptuously off gold plate, and gladdened our eyes with abnormally expensive orchids. The cuisine was under the supervision of a Franco-American *chef*.

My impressions of George Gould's house and its guests were in the nature of a kaleidoscope or a cubist picture. In the park which surrounded the house I found a promiscuous collection of statuary in cement, arranged haphazard under the pine-trees: the statues were mostly copies of famous masterpieces. In this ancient and modern Olympus, the Venus de Milo stood next to Houdon's Diana; the Apollo Belvedere rubbed shoulders with an image of Buddha, whilst the Angel of the Sainte-Chapelle serenely contemplated a portrait-bust of Gambetta. The whole effect was bizarre, and I sometimes wondered if I were not existing in a perpetual dream.

Even sport was, in most instances, merely a pretence, as we chiefly followed a "drag" of a fox's brush dipped in benzine, the odour of which perfumed the country-side, but my host and his friends were clever horsemen if to ride like a troupe of acrobats on horseback constitutes skill.

I once attended a *real* fox-hunt at which the poor beast fled into George Gould's grounds, and sought sanctuary from its pursuers with the Venus de Milo. Yes, incredible though it may seem, Reynard managed to climb up the base of the statue and finally curled himself round the neck of Venus. The effect was to give to a perfectly pure conception an air of extreme indecency, as Venus now resembled a very much undressed woman of the world, who had dispensed with a corsage in favour of the latest vogue in "animal" ties.

One of the most "colourful" huntsmen was a certain Pat Collier, who acted as Master of Hounds, but managed to combine business and sport most advantageously to himself. When Pat was not hunting, he published Catholic brochures and leaflets. He looked like an unfrocked priest who had become a jockey, taking impossible jumps or riding at breakneck speed. His passion for conviviality cost him dear, and he and his friends inclined to expensive cocktails; but, no matter how greatly Pat was "lit up" overnight, he was always "in the pink" the next morning.

I am re-telling my rosary of recollections without malice, and, so far as George Gould was personally concerned, I like him, but I found in him all the oddities of his compatriots. I think he understood what a rude awakening I had received, and how the pleasures, ideas and customs of the New World jarred on my sensibilities.

The aspirations of American society, which represents the remains of the civilization of the Old World excited by a freedom which has become even licentious, is checked neither by

religion, hierarchy, ancestor-worship, family life, history, nor even by the respect of mankind. In the United States there exists something violent which to us poor Europeans is as grating as the grinding of a saw against a stone and which, being contrary to our accepted ideas, makes us lose all sense of rhythm and order. Our vision becomes obscured, our movements are jerky, our expression is anxious, because this kind of tumult stifles all thought, just as the passion for comfort abolishes the Ideal. Family-life is unknown, the "home" is a negligible factor, and divorce is a household word. Women take more than one husband, and men several wives. Everything, from birth to death, in business and domesticity, is heralded so to speak by a brass band or an advance publicity-agent.

I led the cotillions, and in the sweet air of early dawn I formed one of the joyous bands which cycled into the still dreaming country-side in order to refresh themselves after dancing half the night away! These impromptu cycling-parties were all the rage. I flirted with many pretty young girls and one night, when one of them, Miss F., preceded me on the road, something caused her bicycle to upset and she fell just in front of me. I was cycling at full speed and fortunately missed crushing her, but for some reason she never forgave me for that strange manner of approaching her.

The smartest house at that time was that in which Mrs. Mills dispensed lavish hospitality; the luxury by which she was surrounded was, happily, refined. Here I renewed my acquaintance with Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough, now Madame Basan, whom I had previously met in Paris. The Duchess aways reminds me of certain portraits of the Empress Eugénie. But her greatest attraction is her deceptive melancholy, the pathos of her eyes.

At last I decided to return some of the hospitality showered

upon me, and Charles Raoul Duval and I duly sent out invitations for a ball. I had then, as now, a passion for decoration, and, determined to be original, I evolved a decorative scheme which gave my blasé guests something to wonder at. I arranged a "floral" ceiling from which a sun of pink and scarlet gladioli shed its radiance on the dancers: I covered the walls with creepers and bowers until the banal room looked like some fairy bower and the hand of the florist was in no wise discernible. My scheme was wholly successful; all the smartest people in Newport society were present, including the Duke of Alba, Lady Lister Kay and some other well-known English gentlemen. I led the cotillion with Mrs. Travers, and my reputation as a host was made for good and all.

For many reasons, I was not sorry to abandon my unrestful environment, and I accepted the invitation of a millionaire acquaintance to take a trip to Florida on his super-sumptuous yacht. My host had invited under his boating roof those who he deemed might be kindred spirits. His consideration for his guests led him to think that perhaps some of them would like to visit each other in their respective cabins later in the evening, and as he wished to spare them any embarrassment, but at the same time to maintain the right to close his eyes to what was going on, he caused the ice engine to operate all night so that the sound of footsteps and doors should not be heard, thus keeping up a perpetual lullaby which some might believe was made in order to facilitate the sleep of the passengers.

Early one morning I overheard an amusing discussion between the captain and the owner of the yacht, who were on deck.

"For the life of me, sir," grumbled the honest sailor, "I can't see why you will insist on us making such quantities of ice. It's sheer waste—half of it goes overboard." As he

spoke, he pointed to a number of miniature icebergs which followed in the vessel's wake.

"Don't bother your head about *why* I do things," said the owner gruffly. "Any simpleton would know that this yacht is about the hottest spot on earth, and the ice-engine as near as she'll ever get to coolness. Let the thing go on, and say no more about it."

I remember another instance of kindly forethought at a palace where I once stayed in Central America. It was customary for an alarm-bell to ring every morning at six o'clock, and I was told that this far-reaching sound intimated that the servants were stirring to those guests who had strayed from their rooms in order to breathe the fine air of morning.

Later, I was the guest of a well-known American lady during her husband's unavoidable absence. My hostess was pretty, young and music-mad. She sang to perfection the waltz from *Roméo et Juliette* to her own accompaniment. I drew near and began a flirtation which knew no morrow.

On his return, Mr. X. thanked me for having prevented his wife from being dull, and gave me as a present an autograph copy *de luxe* of an illustrated book dealing with all the horned animals peculiar to that particuliar locality!

At Chicago, whither I repaired after my curious experiences, I was introduced to Mrs. Potter Palmer, whose name will be handed down in the social history of the United States as having been the first American hostess to receive an Infanta of Spain! [1] Mrs. Potter Palmer then lived in a magnificent and hideous environment, embellished with many worthless pictures, but twenty years later she shook the dust of Chicago off her soul and betook herself to Paris and London, where we renewed our

[1] Mrs. Potter Palmer entertained H.R.H. the Infanta Eulalia of Spain when H.R.H. came over to attend the Chicago Exhibition as the representative of Spain.

acquaintance. Change of scene often works wonders, and Mrs. Potter Palmer's education profited to such an extent that a visit to her became a pleasure instead of an artistic torture. She had become a convert to Beauty!

I like to believe that it has been my lot to help many rich Americans in the good work of artistic evolution, for after my marriage I gathered together the treasures of the past and made art-dealers millionaires! My American copyists were legion, but they failed to understand that in buying these wonders I was working towards a definite end, and that I would eventually demonstrate the wisdom of my theory. The majority of American so-called collectors buy antiques in a spirit either of competition or of advertisement; the real *lovers* of art can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The mentality of the average wealthy American buyers is peculiar. They possess no ancestral background, they are ignorant of idealism, and they buy works of art which have not the slightest connexion with their outlook, past or present; treasures which are also utterly unsympathetic with an American environment. But the acquisition of any priceless possession from the Old World serves a twofold purpose: it causes the public to talk and to wonder, and it also draws attention to the commodities which are responsible for the colossal fortune of the purchaser.

These competitors in art are responsible for the abnormal rise in the price of antiques, which makes it impossible for many of us to repurchase our family treasures, often, alas! dispersed through marriage, misfortune or death. Americans imagine that American dollars can buy anything or anybody, and I shall never forget the laughable impudence of a *nouveau riche* who, upon seeing the Arc de Triomphe for the first time, thought that she would like to ship it to New York, and *actually imagined that it was for sale, provided the offer was high enough.*

Occasionally, such individuals receive well-merited rebukes for their presumption. A certain copper king greatly desired an historic cabinet in one of the palaces of the Prince of Borromeo. He accordingly wrote to the prince, enclosing a blank cheque, with the request that His Highness would "name the sum." To his intense mortification his cheque was returned, and on the face of it was written:

"A Borromeo does not sell."

After leaving Chicago, I went to Colorado Springs. Concerning the latter place I retain a confused memory of a collection of wooden houses with a crowd of women who lived and voted as men. I went to one of these Feminist reunions, and found it even more vulgar than the French Chambre des Députés. If the manners of these emancipated and unsexed creatures are anything to go by, we shall not only have their vote, but hell on earth into the bargain.

The happiest stage of my Pilgrim's Progress was passed at Glenwood Springs, preparatory to a shooting-expedition in the Rocky Mountains. Here I investigated the interior of an Indian camp, in company with Joseph Stevens, brother of the Comtesse Orlowska, and the Comtesse des Montiers. But I was terribly disappointed in the Noble Savage. I could not believe my eyes, and my imagination was powerless to picture these bestial and degenerate creatures as the descendants of the giant race of whom Plato writes. The Indians were decked out with all the traditional finery of plumes and trappings; the men were tall, but both they and the women looked brutalized by years and years of suffering. However, although comparisons are odious, many of the Indian squaws did not look half so ridiculous as the old women who now dress like young girls and imagine that they represent the last word in "civilized" taste.

The Redskins and I had nothing in common: I hardly spoke during the expedition, but during the day I occasionally bathed with the naked savages in a lake the waters of which were perpetually warm. They were fed, I suppose, by some subterranean hot springs.

We set out on our pursuit of big game, mounted on hardy little mountain ponies, and accompanied by armed guides and a plentiful supply of provisions. We encamped in the snow, five days' distance from any human habitation. Our horses fed on roots, and we lunched and dined off our "kills." It was real sport, doubtless, but a form of it which did not appeal to me. To speak frankly, I was disappointed with everything and everybody, and the scenery left me metaphorically and physically cold. It was, too, indescribably lonely, homesickness seized me, and I felt miserable beyond belief. This existence in the untrodden ways was not sympathetic; life seemed dead, although Nature was dominant in her most cruel aspect.

We followed the trail of numerous bears, and the animals known as "mountain lions," and when every evening I returned to camp after a fatiguing day, with one or two elks to my credit, I felt positively sick with disgust at having murdered such fine creatures.

One afternoon I watched a sinister black eagle carrying away a helpless kid in his talons. Some sentiment of pity for the poor little beast led me to aim at the bird, but, unused to such sentiments, my hand shook—my shot missed. And yet the next moment I was congratulating myself that I had done so, since, I argued, the eagle was, in reality, as defenceless as the kid.

On the way back to camp, I suddenly heard the faint sound of a hunting-horn drifting across the white wilderness by which I was surrounded. . . . I listened . . . and again the uni-

versal silence was broken by the melancholy call of the invisible! What did this signify? It sounded somewhat in the nature of a warning. . . . Was it a precursor of bad news?

We answered the call, and not long afterwards we saw the figure of an Indian runner silhoutted against the horizon—a bronze Mercury traversing the eternal snows. He lost no time in enlightening us of his mission: it was to *me*, and it consisted in a telegram from Miss Gould announcing her arrival in New York.

There was no mistaking the import of this communication, but I could not help reverting to my feelings when I first heard the distant horn. I am by nature a little superstitious, and I remembered that Fear—and not Anticipation—had then obsessed me. Was it possible that I had received a subconscious warning not to attempt Fate in New York? But I banished the fancy as absurd. What had I to fear? I was young and ardent, and Miss Gould was to be won. So, although I knew I should encounter many difficulties and much opposition, I decided to take my chance.

I regained the track which led to the world of life and movement via the nearest railway depot, and during the four days and four nights of my homeward journey, I had plenty of food for thought. But my purpose was still unchanged. *Advienne que pourra,* I said to myself.

CHAPTER III

I REACHED New York in the month of November. It was bitterly cold, but I soon forgot the uninviting weather in the comfortable surroundings of Charles Duval's flat.

Immediately on my arrival, I asked the very natural question: "Are there any letters?" which really meant: "Is there the one letter for which I am hoping?" I was not disappointed: a letter "To wait arrival" lay on the escritoire. It was from Anna Gould.

So the Voice in the Wilderness was significant! I opened the letter. It was short, but to the point. Would I come to the horse-show, where I would find her in her brother Edwin's box?

I was delighted. In the first place, I was now assured of her interest, and secondly, I had always wanted to go to the much vaunted horse-show at which, so I understood, were to be found the best horses and the greatest gathering of millionaires in the world.

The next evening, at half past nine, I duly put in an appearance at the horse-show, and I shall never forget the indescribable impression that it produced on me. Imagine an immense building packed with a crowd of ten thousand persons, a crowd in which every woman has tried to outdress and outpearl some other friend or enemy, while the pitiless radiance of the electric light shines on faces the majority of which would have given points to Jezebel! Never had I seen such a collection of jewels and furs. Many of the women were perambulating jewellers' shops, and their expensive furs baffled any guess as to their value. Some of these luxury-women of

the New World were swathed in sables; others had flung the mist-grey of chinchilla around them as carelessly as if it were the pelt of an alley-cat, and I noticed various dead white faces with carmined lips whose strange allurement was enhanced by the velvet darkness of sealskin. All of them wore enormous pearls; the larger the pearl of great price, the greater the social importance of the wearer. The hard American accent cut the heavily perfumed air like the lashing of whips. The horse-show was an overpowering *milieu* of noisy millionaires.

I made my way slowly through the massed humanity to the Goulds' box, and, let me confess it, my heart beat with pleasurable anticipation as I felt that Miss Gould's letter to me might imply much, coming as it did from a girl who had been more strictly brought up than the usual American debutante.

My first impression of her was one of total eclipse. She wore a large unfashionable black velvet hat; and her pale face and timid eyes seemed inexpressibly pathetic.

Her greeting was coldly conventional. I thanked her for having remembered my existence; *then* she smiled, and her smile was encouraging.

"Have I your permission to call on you?" I asked.

She hesitated. "I'm living with my sister Helen at present, and I don't think you would find yourself in your element in her house; she is far too much of a saint. Besides, Helen is a total abstainer, and you will have to bring your wine with you if she asks you to dinner. But if you care to risk it, and she invites you, please yourself"; and Miss Gould smiled again.

The following morning I received, as I expected, my invitation to dine at Miss Helen Gould's imposing house on Fifth Avenue, which she had inherited from her father.

The first thing that offended me, in her desert of a drawing-room, was a bronze monstrosity of a floor lamp, reminiscent of a tumour. Hastily averting my glance, I at once fell foul of

some gaudy bead curtains which hung before the dividing glass doors, and formed a screen through which any observer could see, and yet remain unseen!

Suddenly, a wave of enlightenment pervaded my being as I investigated the furnishings of this strange *salon.* I had often wondered who on earth had bought the horrors which are displayed in certain shops in the Rue de la Paix. And, in a semi-stupor of astonishment mingled with satisfaction, I knew at last that the purchasers must be certain American millionaires!

Dinner at Miss Helen Gould's was a simple, cooked meal, but I had the pleasure of meeting the wife of Russell Sage, who had the reputation of being the most miserly millionaire in the United States.

Mrs. Sage was a grey-haired old woman who took an instant dislike to me. Miss Helen Gould and herself were inseparable, and they never ceased to lament the sins of humanity in general, and those of society in particular. Both ladies strove unceasingly to uplift the literary taste of America by gifts of innumerable free libraries, in which purity, not popularity, was the first consideration in the selection of the volumes.

Helen Gould had the lowest opinion of men, and in consequence refused to introduce a butler or footman into her household. We were therefore waited on by maidservants, and I received the impression that a bevy of pretty parlour-maids was not at all displeasing to the roguish eye of Frank Gould, who usually made his home with his sister.

I am convinced that Helen Gould persuaded herself that her every thought, word and action marked a definite step in her progress towards perfection. She dressed like a deaconess—low-necked gowns were taboo!—and I could see that Helen, like Mrs. Sage, had mentally weighed me in the balance and found me excessively wanting.

I tried in vain to make myself agreeable to my hostess, and

to melt the icy wall of her prejudices, until the bright thought occurred to me to enact the rôle of a virtuous curate. This happily gained my objective! I was taken for a saint, and as the pearls of holiness fell from my lips, I glanced across at Anna to see whether or no she approved. She smiled, and her smile was more encouraging than before, so I asked Helen Gould to address me as "Boni" *tout simplement*, instead of "Count!"

Much as she disliked men, Helen Gould married, and, having no children of her own, consoled herself by adopting other people's.

However, notwithstanding the narrow-minded life at Helen Gould's and the atmosphere of holiness inseparable from her, I was philosophic enough to admit that, in my especial case, they possessed certain advantages. I knew that Miss Anna's upbringing had been placed on strictly moral lines, and that in marrying a girl of her type I should possess a wife who had been kept absolutely unspotted from the world!

The dominant idea of the Gould family was to keep the Gould fortune in America: it was nothing short of an obsession with them, and it was responsible for much of the injustice and bitterness which I was destined to experience later at their hands.

Whenever I essayed to create a sympathetic understanding between myself and Anna, she hesitated, apparently fearing to obey the dictates of her heart.

"I will never marry you," she remarked one day. "I don't like foreigners, and I won't live out of America."

I smiled coldly (for it was necessary to reprove her). "My dear lady," said I, "you forget that I have not asked you to marry me." Anna was silent, a little wave of crimson suffused her cheeks, but, seeking further justification for her unwarranted statement, she continued: "Frenchmen are dan-

gerous—everyone says that they are born liars and unfaithful husbands."

"Precisely so," I answered, "and this is the reason why you must not dream of marrying *me*."

Anna Gould had been thoroughly inoculated with the idea that all foreigners were bad—it was part of the Gould program—and just as she had delivered her sweeping condemnation, I heard the bead curtains rustle, and I knew that Helen Gould had been eavesdropping. Next moment she entered the *salon* and terminated our *tête-à-tête*, looking for all the world like the Statue of the Commandant in search of Don Juan!

Helen's severe aspect irritated her sister, who possessed her full share of the family obstinacy, and from that moment Anna seriously considered me in the light of a husband. Like most women who play with fire, she found it an exciting habit, and one excessively difficult to drop.

I likewise played with fire, and summoned jealousy to my aid. I therefore gave a dinner for Anna Gould and some charming girls—all daughters of millionaires. I was not disposed to allow her to retain the idea that foreigners were not sympathetic to other American beauties.

So I grouped these roses of girlhood round a table decorated with their namesakes, and I bestowed my attentions lavishly and impartially. Anna was furious, and her anger increased when I transferred my allegiance to some young and amusing married women! While I was seated on a divan beside one of these friends, Anna came in, unexpectedly, and walked angrily up and down the *salon*, seeming to be a prey to intense displeasure. This display of temper told me that I was now regarded by her as her especial property, and little by little I prepared the way for my ultimate proposal.

We spent Christmas at Irvington, Helen Gould's Gothic residence on the Hudson. I liked Irvington far better than

George Gould's country place, as it was better planned and more solidly built. Irvington was surrounded by an English "park," and one of its main features consisted in vistas of hothouses, in which were grown the orchids and carnations sent every day to New York to decorate the Gould mansion.

Miss Helen Gould had not the slightest idea of how to arrange flowers, which, in her rooms, were thrown clumsily and inartistically in numerous vases. In my opinion, a vase of flowers ought to impress the soul of the person who arranges them. Flowers are the inseparable companions of taste, colour and romance, and it must always be remembered that the artist is also a painter!

It does not apparently strike the majority of people that certain flowers demand certain environments; orchids do not match with any style: they are too bizarre for a modern drawing-room, and they should be seen only in conjunction with floor cushions, Oriental interiors or cubist conceptions; they would look wholly incongruous in a Louis XV interior. And, by the same token, how few hostesses realize that no scented flowers should be seen on a dining-table! Carnations would neutralize the value of any *filet;* however, "Mignon" and lilies of the valley would make a *poulet en casserole* worthless. It is the same with all varieties of scented flowers: they never blend with the smell of food.

But to revert to Irvington. It was insufferably dull, and the Feast of Christmas was in the nature of a funeral. We ate plum-pudding, the only seasonable delicacy on a Spartan menu, and at last Anna, in sheer despair, telegraphed to George Gould and begged him to invite us both to Lakewood. George duly replied, and, bidding good-bye to Helen and Holiness, we left Irvington.

At the end of January we all went holiday-making in Canada, travelling in George Gould's private Pullman. Among the

guests were Miss Greta Pomeroy, Miss Kitty Cameron, Sir Roderick Cameron's daughter, Charles Duval and Dick Peaters, already old friends of mine. I had never until now adventured in a private Pullman, but I soon became accustomed to its luxury and ease, for both are in my blood. George's car consisted of a drawing-room, a boudoir and a dining-car and we were waited on by Negroes dressed in spotless white linen. It was coupled on to various express trains which gave us an opportunity of seeing Niagara, Quebec, Ottawa and Montreal, and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Perhaps it gained in piquancy by evening dress being *de rigeur;* it was certainly something quite unique to dress for dinner when travelling by train.

Lord Ava, the son of Lord Dufferin, who was afterwards killed in the Boer War, was one of our party; he was a good-looking man with a propensity for rather cruel witticisms. As I happened to be young and fresh-complexioned, he nicknamed me "Powder-Puff," and this silly epithet clung to me for a long time. I suppose Ava thought that he would hurt my feelings by so designating me, but anyhow I much preferred being known as a Powder-Puff than as a "Blow-Fly," the name with which I afterwards christened my tormentor.

After my restless voyagings in the United States, I found rest and refreshment of spirit in Canada, where English conditions of law and order are apparent on all sides, coupled with the romance and picturesqueness of French influence. I remembered that the Marquis de Montcalm killed in 1759 before Quebec was the son of a Castellane, and I seemed to hear the voices of the dead calling to their descendant and bidding him remember that their heroic blood also flowed in his veins! In New York I had felt an exile. In Canada I felt at home.

In this happy frame of mind I envisaged Quebec, and one Sunday Anna and I went to High Mass at the cathedral. This

Sunday was indeed destined to prove a day of days! Always impressionable, I felt that the exquisite harmonies of colour and sound by which we were encompassed were fraught with some subtle meaning. I listened to my beloved mother-tongue, I was one with the indissoluble Spirit of France, and I was at peace. And, as I looked at my companion, I thought that I could wish for no better fate than to share my life with this young girl, and to awaken love in her heart.

We left the cathedral after Mass, and still under the mystical influence of my faith, I unveiled my inmost soul to Miss Anna Gould, and I asked her to become my wife. She accepted without hesitation. My first thought was to thank God for making me happy, and then, desirous that we should be one in religion as well as in life, I turned impulsively to Anna.

"Oh," I cried, "won't you make me doubly blest by adopting my religion? I know that our outlooks differ in many respects, but perhaps if you could adopt my faith . . ."

Anna Gould drew back; she clasped her hands tightly, faced me and replied unhesitatingly:

"I will never become a Catholic, because if I were to do so I should not be able to divorce you, and if I were not happy I would not remain your wife a moment longer than was necessary."

I was dumbfounded; but my innocence and inexperience were powerless to gauge the depths of the far-seeing American mentality. I did not realize that every American girl only thinks of marriage in connexion with divorce: she never sees her husband as a lifelong companion; she is bred and brought up on the old saying,

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

However, I did not allow this *contretemps* to cloud my present happiness. I remembered Anna's youth, her liking for France. I thought that when once her husband I should be

better able to mould her character, and to discover new points of sympathy. I would not admit, even for a moment, that my wife-to-be merely regarded marriage as—an experiment.

I was entirely and hopelessly wrong; the idea of divorce was omnipresent in the mind of Miss Gould from the day of her marriage until that of our final parting.

During the day we enjoyed some tobogganings, and my fiancée allowed herself to be guided down the steep incline by me, a slope which precipitated us from the top of the mountain on to the St. Lawrence, now a sea of ice.

This giddy rush was destined to be symbolic of our existence—with one difference. Instead of moving on a clear track, we were to encounter mountains of jealousy, envy, evil-minded people and lack of understanding, which caused the toboggan of marriage to overturn and to throw us into the most opposite directions.

We quitted Quebec for Montreal, there to be fêted, dined and wined in surroundings once more reminiscent of Old France. Then we returned once more to the noise and ugliness of New York, but I heard, with intense pleasure, that Nellie Melba had just arrived there, and I lost no time in going to see her.

Which of the many friends who know and love Nellie Melba can convey any adequate impression of her charm and genius? Many have listened to her, but few can describe her. In those days she was as slight as she is now, her clever eyes still remain the same, and the melody that flows from her mouth is as golden as of old. She is the most crystal-souled person I have ever met—there are no dark corners in her heart; she is essentially charming, good-natured and unassuming, and, greatest wonder of all, she is unspoilt by success.

Madame Melba, like everyone else, had heard of my engagement, and, as her extraordinary intuition had given her under-

standing of the complex femininity of the New World, she constituted herself my Egeria. "Boni—be careful, think well before you marry an American," said she. "As often as not, American girls make elusive wives." But, unfortunately for myself, I did not recognize the wisdom of her counsel: if I had done so, my life-story might have been written differently. *I believed in myself, more than in anyone else.*

My marriage was fixed for the following month. The newspapers devoted headlines and columns to our affairs, and the most impossible gossip was prevalent concerning my family and my friends. Vulgarity excelled itself—even for America. Women journalists laid siege to Anna's bedroom, jewellers and art-dealers lived at my front door: my valet waxed rich, and I waxed angry. What an inferno New York represented! I wanted, oh, how badly I wanted to run away from it all!

Anna was loaded by her family with gifts of jewellery and, considering their Scotch strain, I suppose the Goulds really thought that they were generous.

I had inherited a historic pearl necklace, which belonged to my mother for her life, and which she at once presented to my fiancée. But Anna was not impressed by the five rows of pearls, with their emerald clasp, and she did not concern herself with the romances of its long-dead owners. The only comment made by this girl of nineteen was that the pearls were not large enough to be fashionable: I think my father's sapphire and ruby ring pleased her better.

I was married to Anna Gould on March 4, 1895, and on my wedding morning Pat Collier sent me the best horse in his stables, in memory of the many obstacles that we had surmounted! George Gould arranged everything, and the Archbishop of New York, Monsignor Corrigan, performed the ceremony at the Goulds' house on Fifth Avenue.

Our marriage settlements had been most carefully drawn up,

and my wife retained full control of her fortune. I insisted upon that, and I mention it now, in order to deny all the malicious assertions against me. Anna Gould allowed me to spend her money of her own free will.

My witnesses were the French Ambassador, M. Patenôtre (whose daughter married my eldest son three years ago), Prince Giovanni del Drago and my brother Jean. I was carried away by varying emotions: my grandmother Castellane and my grandfather Juigné were paramount in my thoughts. What would they have said? Once again, I lamented our national follies, the loosening of our traditional ties, and the uncertainty of life. I visualized the possibilities of my chosen road, its brilliance, its romance, and I thrilled at the prospect. I dreamt of happiness for my wife; and for myself—success in everything that appertained to my tastes, my country and my faith!

Our marriage was solemnized with all due luxury. Anna wore a white satin gown and a lovely lace veil which had cost 6,000 dollars in Paris. (She used this veil as a bedspread later.) I remember, too, a plenitude of flowers, an infinite variety of gifts, unheard-of publicity, the music of Palestrina, Madame Emma Eames-Storey as soloist, and a crowd of guests bejewelled and gowned, as befitted such an occasion.

I have a confused impression of flowers, perfume and music, and the dark eyes of Anna shining like stars, under her veil, whilst her little hand trembled in mine like a fallen petal of a white rose. Then the glorious voice of Madame Storey rose above the luxury, and as the sweet notes soared higher and higher, it was as though some captive lark had made its escape towards freedom and the sun!

The ceremony was followed by a lunch served at little tables; the menu was French, but everything was camouflaged; thus, baked potatoes contained cutlets, and apparent chickens turned out to be merely sausage meat. No dish was what it was sup-

posed to be. The guests were not forgotten by Mrs. Gould in the gift-giving scheme, and the ladies found gold vanity cases hidden under their napkins whilst the men likewise discovered gold cigarette cases.

The walls of the reception rooms were covered with lilies of the valley, and the candelabra were transformed into baskets of roses. Orchids spread their perfumed fingers in all directions, and other white flowers blossomed in crystal vases. The fragrance was delicious.

In these unfamiliar surroundings, my mother, in her red velvet gown, sables and Alençon lace, looked like an ancestral portrait purchased by a millionaire. No words can convey any idea of her distress of mind. She could not become acclimatized to New York, nothwithstanding the kindness and real affection of her reception, and, with the true mother-instinct, she at once realized the difficulties and disillusions which must inevitably follow my marriage. My father was less concerned about my future, chiefly because he was very much occupied with himself and very much annoyed with the journalists who persisted in describing him as "The Old Marquis."

Jean, on the contrary, was literally overcome by the luxury of the New World, but I only lived for the moment when I should embark for Europe, and there regain my lost Paradise of Tradition and Beauty. Music-halls, advertisements, newspapers, theatres were full of our doings, real and imaginary; our caricatures brightened the comic papers: it was the beginning (although I knew it not) of the long press campaign of persecution to which I have been subjected for twenty-five years.

Anna and I passed our honeymoon at Irvington, the old home of the Goulds. We were very happy in the peace of a simple life and I was full of hope for the future. Away from her family, Anna showed me an entirely new side of her char-

acter. She was a charming companion, and I hoped that after I had helped to complete her soul education I should find in her the perfect helpmeet.

One evening, when I was walking in the park at Irvington, I, very stupidly, tried to manipulate the tap which regulated the water supply of a fountain. All at once I was deluged with ice-cold water, and, always a little inclined to be superstitious, I wondered whether the Fates intended to throw cold water on my future projects!

On March 6, we left New York on the *Oceanic*, and I could not help contrasting my departure from America with my arrival there.

I had come to America with no definite plans. I had, it is true, dreamed, but I had not actually aspired. I returned to Europe the husband of a rich heiress of the United States—but I did not dream that my marriage was destined to bring no ultimate happiness either to myself or to the woman I had married. My destiny has been akin to the fate of a rudderless ship, on which I have been a helpless passenger; I have unduly disturbed the present with my plans for the future, and by so doing I have cheated myself of peace. Throughout my life runs a perpetual *leitmotif*, inexplicable to myself, and attributable I suppose to some hereditary "kink." I have always blended the futile with the serious. In that lies my tragedy—and, occasionally, my condemnation!

CHAPTER IV

I WAS born in the year 1867 at Rochecotte, in Touraine, a part of France particularly associated with historic châteaux. The very soul of this region is impregnated with the romance and tragedy of a bygone age.

Our family originated in Provence, and the name of Castellane appears in the earliest annals of the country: most of us have lived heartily, and the majority have remained faithful to tradition, and to the motto of their House—"Honour above Honours." My ancestors exercised the prerogative of coining money—a fact worthy of notice, since most of their descendants appear to have been mainly endowed with a capacity for spending it.

The château of Rochecotte, built in the reign of Louis XVI, is situated on the side of a hill, from whence it dominates the valley of the Loire. Its construction does not lack originality: in some ways it resembles an Italian villa, and from the gradually ascending terraces one views the distant panorama of the primitive country-side, melting into the soft blues and mist-like greys of the horizon. On one side of the château, owing to a disproportionate level, the principal rooms are arranged on the ground floor, whilst on the other they occupy the first and second floors. This irregularity, however, in no wise detracts from the appealing charm of Rochecotte, and, as I write, I especially recall its autumnal beauty, when masses of Virginia creeper drape the walls and pergolas with banners of crimson, orange and fading emerald, which produce an indescribable effect when the rays of the setting sun transform

the scarlet splendour into the semblance of showers of flames. . The château, in the days of my youth, represented a temple dedicated to ancestor-worship, in which each succeeding generation was taught to remember the grandeur of the undying past, and the duties of the future. At Rochecotte, family portraits were not arranged according to their material value, but simply with regard to the importance of the sitters as individuals who had helped to make history. Everything spoke of good taste, a feeling for simplicity, and a horror of disorder, but although quite ordinary furniture was often placed side by side with valuable "pieces," the general effect was harmonious and unpretentious—two essentials in the arrangement of any home, whether it be a palace or a château, a house or a cottage. However, most terms to-day are merely travesties, and the designation of "a man of taste" is often given to a rich connoisseur who amasses artistic objects at random, simply from a mad desire to "possess" them, and who is, in consequence, the victim of innumerable frauds in his indiscriminate pursuit of the antique.

Most collections thus made might easily serve as models for exhibitions devoid of artistic feeling, or for inferior museums. In such a case, the house and its owner have usually nothing in common, there is no sympathy between the animate and the inanimate, the portraits do not even resemble the sitters; no person or thing has a recognized value; in short, these houses are best described as the nests of jays who like to imagine themselves peacocks.

Most fortunately, however, for their importance of environment on the mind of a child, Rochecotte presented none of these horrors. Everything there served as a link in the chain of the past, and silently recalled some definite landmark in the history of a family which attached more importance to the traditions of good breeding than to any accepted ideas of the

day. The very bedrooms were relegated to the sole use of special occupants, whose names were still affixed outside the doors, even when those who had once slept within the rooms had long since "passed." Memory triumphed, the invisible were all-powerful, in fact the whole *milieu* represented the evolution of one's ancestors, set in a *mise en scène* peculiar to them. Its effect on my character will remain until the last day of my life.

Such was the kingdom over which my grandmother exercised an absolute domination, and under her despotic sway my brothers and myself lived until we had attained the years of descretion associated with one's majority.

The old Marquise de Castellane, *née* Pauline de Périgord, and one of the most remarkable women of her day, had been brought up by her uncle, the famous Prince de Talleyrand, who invariably alluded to her as the "Angel in the House." As a little child she accompanied Talleyrand to London in 1832, when that astute diplomat assisted at the conference which decided the fate of Belgium.

I remember hearing her describe the late Queen Victoria, then a charming young girl of thirteen. She was also present at the historic children's party given by William IV for "Princess" Victoria, when the notorious Lady Cardigan, Adeline de Horsey, a child of eight, was found fast asleep in the King's chair. The gifted Lord Holland, and the equally gifted Lord Grey, were Talleyrand's inseparable friends, and I always regret that my grandmother was not old enough to keep any written record of her interesting experiences in England.

She was obsessed with the cult of her uncle: his influence dominated her life, her thoughts and her outlook. Her greatest happiness consisted in the knowledge that she alone had persuaded Talleyrand on his death-bed to ask and to obtain the Pope's forgiveness for his past "backsliding." The dying

Prince thus made his act of submission and contrition to his offended Church, and my grandmother never forgot the circumstances attendant on the death of the most celebrated and most adversely criticized Frenchman of his day.

"I always appreciated," she would tell us, "the real goodness of M. de Talleyrand: it permeated my soul when I was a child, and I knew that his actions during the Concordat of 1801 must inevitably procure him the privilege of dying fortified by the sacraments." It was a proud moment for her when Pope Gregory XVI recognized her gentle influence in her uncle's Act of Submission, and sent her the wonderful lapis lazuli and gold rosary usually given to none but sovereigns. This sacred object never left my grandmother's bedroom, and to-day it is one of the most cherished heirlooms at Rochecotte.

My grandmother was small in stature, but she made every inch of her presence felt, and the majority of "giants" usually became pygmies in the presence of this extraordinary personality. She was the embodiment of courtesy and aloofness; steeped in the traditions of her rank, she would not extend her hand to indiscriminate acquaintances. But, notwithstanding this hauteur, her mind, her speech, her voice radiated charm, and her sterling qualities shone halo-wise, and diffused their radiance on the most eminent persons of her day. One of our most interesting "exhibits" is the album wherein are inscribed the illustrious names connected with the Church and the State, who, after the death of the Prince de Talleyrand, transferred their homage to his niece.

She was mainly interested in the society of statesmen, and the Princesse de Lieven [1] used to address her as "My dear Minister for Foreign Affairs."

[1] Dorothea Christophorowna de Benkendorf, Princesse de Lieven, born in 1784, accompanied her husband to his Embassy in Berlin in 1809, and to London (1812–1834). From 1813 to 1823, she was very intimate with Prince de Metternich. She came to France in 1836, and became the inspirer of Guizot.

THE GARDENS OF MARAIS

The first page of her album containing the names of her guests begins with these flattering words: "Rochecotte is an enchanting place, where there are many questions to be asked, and here lives the person who is best able to answer them." Signed: Prince de Talleyrand.

Thiers, also, went from Tours to Rochecotte [1] on November 17, 1870, to visit his master's niece and to seek inspiration from her.

"A good day," he wrote, "in one of the worst years of my life, perhaps the very worst."

The Rochecotte of my grandmother's day, alas! exists no longer. Ours was an ideally patriarchal life, one rooftree covering our whole family, whose combined incomes materially contributed to the success of the home. Everybody and everything, however, gravitated round my grandmother in the ceremonial of her *petit lever.*

It was then that my grandmother issued her orders, and received various dependents, who knew that the *petit lever* represented the propitious moment for proffering petitions to Madame la Marquis.

M. Dubois, the steward, and his sister, who acted as my grandmother's private secretary, were the first to put in an appearance, followed by Madame Lecreux, a kind of "companion," and Madame Portot, my grandmother's dresser. Then came the nuns, whose duties consisted in repeating prayers, or else reading aloud the latest news of the day, whilst Madame Guérin, wife of the *chef,* Madame Taillé, the head gardener and the butler brought up the rear. The suppliants, mostly village girls, were disposed in various ante-rooms, exactly as at an audience by a Cardinal Secretary of State, and our lackeys passed and repassed, calling out their names in order of priority.

[1] Thiers was about to undertake his famous tour to the different courts of Europe.

My grandmother believed in taking a long time over her *toilette*, and she would have been absolutely unsympathetic towards the hurried "dressings" of her descendants. Two hours alone sufficed her, and she allowed nothing to disturb her during this period allotted to personal adornment. She then received her *chef in concilio*, and discussed the question of lunch and dinner, which he and my grandmother had raised to the level of a fine art: in fact, our *chef* boasted a European reputation, and many culinary court dignitaries approached him in order to be favoured with certain recipes associated with his talent. Guérin, who was a devoted servant, as well as a miraculous *chef*, loved a joke, and always signed his letters as "Food-Director of the House of Castellane." In many ways we had not progressed perceptibly since the days of Louis XIV.

The lost art of conversation flourished at Rochecotte in the days of my grandmother. To-day few women trouble to think properly, much less to speak in a decorative way: it is a period of disorder and slang, and most women talk as inharmoniously as they dance. How such women would ridicule the round table in the large *salon* at Rochecotte, where my grandmother sat ensconced in a huge "winged" chair, her pale face emerging from her frilled cap! She invariably carried an astrakhan muff in her transit from her boudoir to the *salon*, and her tiny feet were always buried in a foot-muff, even on the hottest day of summer.

A green shade shielded her eyes from the glare of sunlight or firelight, and, once settled with due dignity, my grandmother presided at a reunion of her friends, all of whom surrounded her on chairs arranged a degree lower than her own.

The men of the house-party hovered on the outskirts of this charmed circle, and warmed their coat-tails in front of the great fire which required specially cut logs in order to send

out enough heat to make the vast *salon* habitable. It is a well-known fact that certain scents and certain music are always associated with certain places and people, and I never smell the fragrance of burning pine-wood without associating it with Rochecotte. Once more I hear the hum of conversation, once more I see the great fire-place and its smouldering logs, and, out of their red depths, trembling fingers of blue flame, rising like the outstretched hand of a prisoner for ever pleading for liberation.

Some of the habitués of Rochecotte saw all, heard all, but said nothing. These included the Count de Bertoux, my grandmother's confidential secretary, a man of distinguished birth, who paced to and fro, taking mental notes of all that happened; Monsieur de Bennetot, secretary to the Comte de Falloux, and, last but not least, our chaplain, the Abbé Couvreux, a sickly-looking man with an ashen-grey face, who contemplated the company much as a chess-player regards his pawns.

The ladies kept their fancy work in the drawers of the round table, on the top of which were arranged in painful precision a collection of albums which often sheltered photographs of old and antedated people, and a quantity of back numbers of *Le Moniteur Universal*, *La Gazette de France* and *Le Journal Officiel.*

Three cruel lamps shed a fierce white light on the working party, and effectually frustrated any folding of the hands or any attempt to snatch a few moments' after-dinner slumber.

We invariably dined at seven, and we sat over the meal for what seemed an interminable period. My grandmother clearly believed in the truth of the quaint old saying, "One never grows old at table." But if we did not grow old, some of us grew sleepy, and I often saw one or two of our guests who (suddenly recalled to a realization of their surroundings) had evident difficulty in putting their napkins in the heavy ivory

rings inscribed with their names . . . and in so doing they usually nodded, for all the world like some drowsy mandarin from far Cathay.

Once safely returned from the elaborate business of dinner, the ladies—those *Mères de l'Eglise*—recommenced their endless knitting as assiduously as the Fates spun their thread. But woe betide the daring spirit who, taking advantage of their apparent detachment, hazarded a joke, or even a harmless sally! Such an offender would be instantly subjected to a withering glance from the Ladies of the Round Table, sufficient to check any further frivolity. This Junoesque look made the boldest quail, and as the long yellow knitting-needles flashed in and out of the imperious hands of the ladies, their click-clack marked the degree of appreciation or contempt with which the men's conversation inspired the listeners. From time to time, driven to desperation by some unheard-of stupidity, an impatient lady would interpose an accidental observation, extremely discomfiting to the person to whom it was addressed. The younger members of the house-party dreaded the bitter tongues of their elders, and none more so than Princess Czatorista, who, at the first danger signal, retreated from the Round Table, and played Chopin's waltzes with feverish intensity.

One of the great events at Rochecotte was the arrival of "Marinette," otherwise the Duchesse de Galliéra, to whom France owes the School of Political Science, the Museum that bears her name, and a thousand and one charities. "Marinette" invariably brought the same present for my grandmother whenever she visited us: this consisted in several yards of silk velvet, from which her friend created "my beautiful evening gown," which she wore until Marinette appeared with another dress-length.

What a number of well-known names I remember in con-

nexion with Rochecotte and its house-parties! I visualize the Viscomtesse de Rayenval, whose personality was inseparable from her tapestry-frame—she seemed to spend her life in embroidering cushion covers! Then there was the Comtesse de la Ferronaye, an old lady with a most amusing and wicked tongue, whose sister-in-law, Mrs. Augustus Craven (once well known as the authoress of sentimental novels, notably *Le Récit d'une Sœur*), always accompanied her. Being disposed to regular habits, Mrs. Craven made a point of retiring punctually at nine o'clock, to pass an hour in the chapel before she said good night to her old English husband, whom she always addressed as "dear Gustus."

But the chief excitement in our young lives was the arrival of our maternal grandparents, the Marquis and the Marquise de Juigné, and that of our uncle, the Duc de Talleyrand, Sagan and Valency, a godson of Louis XVIII, whom my grandmother usually spoke of as "my brother Louis," to distinguish him from "my brother Alexandre," the Duc de Dino, and godson of the Emperor of Russia.

"My brother Louis" (who married Mlle. de Montmorency as his first wife) was a remarkable individual. He was short, clumsily built and excessively plain, but he carried himself regally, his courtesy and elegance were those of a vanished age, and he regulated his social life according to similar canons of etiquette. He never neglected the most infinitesimal details, and consequently his poise was never open to criticism.

I remember once meeting him walking up and down a corridor before going into the *salon;* he wore a high grey felt hat with a deep *crêpe* band, a carnation flaunted in his buttonhole, and he had wrapped a thick plaid shawl round his shoulders. "Don't be astonished at seeing me dressed like this," smiled the old man. "I make a point of acclimatizing myself to any sudden change of temperature—and the *salon* here is

occasionally on the warm side." He was a wonderful old man, and he hunted with the Valency hounds until he was eighty-seven years of age!

His second wife, born a Castellane, was the widow of Count Hatzfelt, the Prussian Minister in Paris under the Empire. Her sole interests appeared to be the stag-hunts and shoots at Sagan. The Duchess was an imposing-looking woman, with a brusque manner, and she did not scruple to call a spade a spade. But her excessive frankness never became vulgarity, and she was one of the few women who had the courage to smoke, and to enjoy an after-dinner cigar. Everyone loved her, and her daughter Dolly, Princess Fürstenberg, married my brother Jean as her second husband.

The Radziwills—that massed band of "Highnesses"—made an annual invasion of Rochecotte. My father's sister had married the head of the clan, and our cousins Betka and Hélène (known in Parisian society as the Comtesse Romain and Joseph Potocka) often used to stay for weeks together at the château.

Princess Radziwill was imbued with the spirit of democracy, and ridiculed her high-sounding titles. I remember hearing her talk about a country-house visit which she once paid to an English friend, a wealthy and very snobbish person, who had instructed her butler to announce dinner by saying "Her Highness' dinner is served." My aunt, amused by such unexpected pomp and circumstance, replied: "My Highness will follow you."

The Comte de Rességuier and the self-satisfied Comte de Falloux were also yearly visitors. The Comte was chiefly noticeable by reason of his silken skull-cap, his "wine-stain" birthmark, his enormous nose, and his elastic-side boots with green straps: he never came to Rochecotte without his mother-in-law and his daughter Loyde, who always reminded me of

a tree affected with blight, so twisted and embittered was she! Poor Loyde, who possessed no taste for dress, endeavoured to conceal her deformity under a three-piece cape, each tier bordered with heavy fringe. This garment was always awry, the fringe never balanced properly, and I used to think that it lived in a state of perpetual rebellion against having to cover a hump!

The visit of the de Falloux usually coincided with that of the Comte and Comtesse de Caqueray, who represented a fruitful union of May and December. The Comte was eighty, his wife twenty-five, and his passion for paternity was gratified by the yearly arrival of a little Caqueray!

What a host of faces beset me when I think of the days of my youth! I still see Cardinal de Falloux in his flamboyant black wig, returning thanks to God for a dinner worthy of a sybarite, and hypnotizing our simple servants with the splendour of his amethyst ring; once again I pity poor Abbé Bernard, the curé of St. Jacques du Haut Pas, upon whom my grandmother imposed a rigorous fast during Lent, oblivious of the fact that the unfortunate man suffered from diabetes, or that she had procured a special dispensation which permitted her to eat chicken, "for reasons of health." I remember, as if it were yesterday, an old couple who were nearly blind, and who always poured their wine on the table-cloth under the mistaken impression that it was a wine-glass!—pathetic figures, long since vanished with so many other familiar faces. Yes, once more I listen to the heated arguments between the Abbé Lagrange (ex-secretary to the Bishop of Orleans), an unwashed but excessively pious man, and his opponents. The France of that day was already disorganized, and bitter words often passed between the "Liberal" Catholic party, friends of *Le Soleil,* and the supporters of the *Univers:* the first, partisans

of Monseigneur Dupanloup and the Comte de Falloux, their opponents being represented by Monseigneur Freppel and Monsieur Veuillot.

My grandmother's friends were for the most part "personalities" like herself, and one of the most charming neighbours at Rochecotte was the Comtesse de la Rochejaquelin, formerly Princesse de Talmont, who passed her time between her château de Fleury and the château of Ussé, a beautiful property on the opposite bank of the Loire.

Ussé is feudal in character, and one crosses a drawbridge in order to reach the great entrance of the château. The courtyard has been badly restored, but Vauban added a pavilion to the old structure, an addition which ruined the original architecture, but made the château possible to live in with some degree of comfort. The staircase is imposing, and the spacious reception-rooms are full of interesting souvenirs and valuable pictures.

Madame de la Rochejacquelin was a fragile-looking old lady, who was never seen without a picturesque lace cap, but who actually possessed no artistic sense whatever. When Ussé required "renovating," the Comtesse treated its restoration exactly as the ordinary person sees to the papering of a room. Someone had to do it—no matter who, so long as it was done.

Her choice fell on a woman—Mlle. de Fauveau, a strange creature, who dressed like a man, and whose head was almost clean-shaven. This, we were informed, represented a vow made by Mademoiselle never to allow her hair to grow until a King reigned over France.

As a "restorer" of old castles, the shaven and shorn lady was a failure. She slashed and gashed the lovely stonework, she added hideous modernities, and she accomplished more evil than good during her sojourn at Ussé.

It fell to the lot of my father to infuse a little light-hearted

gaiety into the Talleyrand-saturated atmosphere of Rochecotte. My father was the embodiment of good nature and cheerfulness, he made his way happily through life, he never lost his temper, he sang, recited, wrote comedies and romances, and astonished everyone by his versatile humour—a throw-back surely to his ancestor, Boni de Castellane, the celebrated troubadour of the thirteenth century, who terminated a colourful existence on the scaffold. My father's particular friends at Rochecotte were Captain Vicomte Henri de la Panouse, Commandant Comte de Canisy and Lieutenant Lyautey, who afterwards became Resident General of Morocco, Minister of War and Marshal of France.

We saw a good deal of military society, as the officers stationed at Tours and Saumur joined forces at the various meets. My brother Jean and I loved sport, and a good day's hunting always made an irresistible appeal to us: we delighted in the movement, the joy of living, the satin-coloured horses and the impatient hounds. Hunting puts one on an equal footing with everybody else, and for days after we talked of nothing but our "jumps" and our experiences, notably that of Comte Robert de Clermont-Tonnerre, who once had an amusing adventure with a hungry "mount."

On this occasion the hounds had lost the scent in the open country, and the Comte, wishing, so to speak, to take his bearings, tied his horse to a gorse-bush, whilst he proceeded to investigate. But the horse was hungry, so, *faute de mieux,* he devoured the gorse-bush, and galloped back to the stables, greatly to the annoyance of the Comte, who was obliged to return to the château on foot.

My mother had always a before-dinner reception in the comfortable smoking-room which was regarded as belonging to her. It was a veritable cosy corner, and infinitely preferable (at least, so thought Youth) to the ceremonious state apart-

ments and those who forgathered there. In the smoking-room we met the officers who had taken part in the day's sport, and our conversation was not interrupted by the sound of knitting-needles!

I remember how charming my young mother appeared, as she lay on her *chaise longue*, with an Oriental screen as a background, surrounded by flowers and the countless intimate trifles inseparable from a pretty woman. If my grandmother was known as an angel, my mother deserves a like epithet. She has spent her life in making the lives of others happy, and I wonder how many kind actions and kind thoughts can be traced to her direct influence.

My father was no respecter of persons, although he stood somewhat in awe of his mother, and I remember that he thoroughly enjoyed calling his dogs after various Ministers; thus, one of them answered to the name of "Gambetta," and a Scotch terrier was known as "Freycinet." It sounded almost irreverent when one heard him telling "Gambetta" to "lie down," or threatening "Freycinet" with a sound hiding. I also imagine that he saw the humorous side of the rather dull "duty" dinner given by my grandmother to some of the leading bourgeoisie. Even the names of these worthies were reminiscent of vaudeville. Take, for instance those of Dr. Beaupoil, who with his excellent wife was always invited, M. Chicoine, M. Rougeoreille, the Abbé Routaboul—all these names had a playbill flavour, and my father doubtless looked upon the whole entertainment much in the light of an amusing curtain-raiser.

Every year, on her way back from Evian, my grandmother made a "retreat" at Annecy, and it once occurred to my father that it would be a pretty compliment to visit her. So we repaired to the Convent of the Clarisses, and, as a great favour, we were allowed to inspect a much treasured relic—the hat

once worn by St. François de Sales. This hat, so said the Mother Superior, exhaled a perfume which would make even attar of roses tremble for its reputation.

Upon hearing this, my father became positively excited, and begged to be allowed to sample the odour of sancity. The hat was handed to him, and he straightway buried his nose in its crown . . . whilst we waited anxiously for his appreciation of the miraculous perfume. But none was forthcoming, and my father made no attempt to conceal his disappointment. "Pah! a fine perfume indeed!" he remarked. "The only perfume in that old hat is mildew!"

The effect of such profanity may well be imagined; my grandmother was unutterably shocked, and the scandalized community indignantly removed the relic into the hat-box assigned for its safe-keeping. "But it *did* smell of mildew, so what's all the fuss about?" remarked my astonished parent.

In the month of April, the *ménage* at Rochecotte was transferred to Paris, and we bade *au revoir* to our friends in the country, and to my grandmother's cousins, the Princess de Ligne and the Comtesse de Mérode, who used to visit us in the first warm bright days of spring. These ladies had long since overflowed the boundaries assigned them by nature, and their amazing corpulence precluded them from indulging in any active pursuits. After a satisfying lunch they drowsed peacefully in the *salon*, and directly they felt uncomfortable by reason of the heat, and the art of M. Guérin, they untied their massive bonnets and deposited them on the candelabra, as on a cap-stand. Sleep, serene and secure, overtook them. Notwithstanding their occasional undecorativeness, old ladies were not ashamed of their age, or of looking their years. To-day persons of the same type dress like girls of eighteen, and it is apparently a crime to be old—or to grow old gracefully.

The unforgettable journey to Paris from Rochecotte was characteristic of my grandmother, who refused to be hurried, and ignored the fact that time, tide and trains wait for no woman. It was therefore imperative, on the day of our departure, to station a watcher on the terrace, who could, like Sister Anne, report if there was anything coming. The "anything," in this case, was the smoke of the engine, which could be discerned like a fragile feather floating over the poplars ten minutes before the train arrived at Saint Patrice.

At the first sound of the distant whistle, Madame Portot, my grandmother's dresser, ran through the *salons* and implored my grandmother to make haste; the steward did likewise—not once, but twice, and his persistence so exasperated her that at first she ignored his summons, and continued to spray herself with eau-de-Cologne and tell her beads. At last she spoke. "You annoy me," said the relentless voice of my grandmother. "*I wish to miss the train.*"

Outside the château the travelling-carriage and its postilions waited in the sunlight, and Pierre, the old coachman, drowsed on the box, whilst agitated servants filled the interior with cushions, bags, shawls and a plethora of useful and useless things.

But my grandmother never missed the train. How she managed it, I cannot tell, but I suspect that it was with the connivance of M. Gilet, the stationmaster, who would have thought it most unseemly for the Marquise to be inconvenienced, and who had no scruples in preventing the rest of the passengers from arriving at their destinations at the scheduled time.

A compartment had been reserved for us several days in advance, and into this my grandmother was propelled by two footmen, whose duty it was to assist her to climb the giddy height from the platform. Three of the suite followed her, and then my brother and I swung ourselves into the crowded

compartment. We were not allowed to talk, and we were obliged to sit quietly and watch our elders. But at Tours we were graciously permitted to buy prunes, and likewise sugared cakes at Aubrais, so we spent the remainder of the journey munching our "goodies," and reading the religious books with which my grandmother enlivened her travels.

We arrived at the Gare d'Orléans in a state of sticky piety, happy at finding ourselves once more in Paris. But we were then unaware that real happiness is rarely to be found in great cities and most certainly hardly ever in Paris.

CHAPTER V

My parents owned several estates. One of these was the ancient château of Aubijou in Cantal, an electoral fief which once belonged to Jean II (The Good), and had passed in succession to the Tour d'Auvergnes, the La Rochefoucaulds and the Rohan-Chabots, lasping finally to the Maréchal de Castellane, whose mother was a member of the last-named family.

Extreme generosity has always been associated with our House, and my father, who spent his fortune lavishly on the requirements of his tenants, often, sad to relate, neglected the home exchequer! He considered that the duties of his position constituted him the father of his people, so far as their welfare was concerned, and he asked no return for his manifold kindness to the peasants of Touraine.

The parish priest was a familiar figure at Rochecotte, and he always dined with us on Sunday. The worthy curé, who dearly loved a good dinner, counted the days and hours between the Sabbaths. He first tucked a large napkin under his chin, in order to preserve his soutane from any possible grease spots, and he then divided his crisp roll into pieces, whilst awaiting the arrival of M. Guérin's masterpieces.

Fortunately, religious persecution was not practised at the time of which I write, and as Church and State dwelt together in unity, the curé and the schoolmaster, M. Dury, were on the best possible terms. M. Dury, who gave me my first lessons, was an original-looking person with floating side-whiskers, and whenever he came to the château he arrayed himself in a pro-

digiously long overcoat and a broad-brimmed, archaic satin top-hat. Madame Dury was no beauty, and she was hardly ever seen without an imposing bonnet tied with wide ribbon strings; she possessed only one tooth and, strange to say, she was inordinately proud of this sole survivor of the Old Guard. The couple made no secret of their passionate devotion to each other, and it was amusing to watch their progress to Mass. They kept step with the bell until the church was reached, and then M. Dury, releasing his wife's arm, gravely preceded her to their seats.

Poor M. Dury! He found me, at six years old, the worst pupil in arithmetic he had ever handled! It was useless to attempt to lighten my darkness with cubes which represented movable sums. I was hopeless, and I can still hear him saying, in accents of real despair: "Monsieur Boni, you'll *never* be able to add figures, you'll never understand their value." Many a true word is spoken in jest, and M. Dury never made a more correct appreciation of my capacity for arithmetic, although he perhaps underestimated my capacity for subtraction!

The Durys invariably identified themselves with the distribution of prizes given by the nuns of the Convent of Brétèche, where the girls from the Communes of St. Patrice, St. Michel and Langeais were educated at our expense. This was one of the moral obligations which my grandmother took as a matter of course!

Every morning, the Reverend Mother Philomène visited the château to make her daily report as to the progress and health of her pupils, and to proffer petitions for the sick and needy of the community. She was usually accompanied by Sister Clothilde, a domineering and embittered old woman, and it often required real diplomacy to prevent these pious women from rending each other in pieces. As sisters in holiness they,

as in duty bound, loved one another, but as women they openly detested each other, and when their disputes became (as they often did) violent, the bishop himself had to act as peacemaker. However, they stood more in awe of my grandmother than of any spiritual director, and a hint of appeal to Madame la Marquise usually sufficed to calm the troubled surface of the conventual waters.

At vespers, when the Abbé Fleurat presided at the organ, the nuns and their pupils supplied the vocal part of the service. But, here again, strife triumphed over religion, and a persistent war raged between the nuns and the Abbé, who possessed entirely diverse opinions on the subject of music. Whenever the priest insisted on one particular rendering of a strophe, the sisters, blissfully regardless of his wishes, declaimed it in their own way, and in the inharmonious confusion which ensued my grandmother would rise from her seat and, angrily shaking her medal-hung rosary, would impose a truce on the saintly belligerents.

These apparently trivial details of our life in the country go to prove the *entente cordiale* which once existed between the great landowners and their dependents. To-day no trace of this remains; the tie is broken, and no one laments the loss of these picturesque and patriarchal conditions more than myself.

French provincial life forty years ago was more or less unspoilt, and if it were occasionally inconsequent, it was generally decorative and innocently amusing.

In connexion with the spectacular side of our festivities, I always remember the prodigious energy of the town band, which enacted an important rôle on all religious and secular red-letter days, notably on the Feast of the Assumption, when a frieze-like procession of pilgrims wended its way across the

park to the château, in order to take part in the service held in the great court-yard at Rochecotte.

The procession seemed as artificial as the *motif* of an Italian picture; the women wore the curious pointed headdress so often depicted by Giotto, and they passed between two rows of young girls, dressed in white muslin, holding mother-of-pearl rosaries, the only touch of colour being afforded by their wide sashes of garter-blue.

Seen under the blazing leaden sky of summer, the motionless foliage and the trembling heat-haze, this living ribbon of hooded women had something almost uncanny about it; and the pilgrims did not appear to be actually alive until they broke into the strains of "God protect Rome and France, in the name of the Sacred Heart."

A high altar had been arranged in the centre of the court-yard of the château, hung with beautiful yellow silk and wreaths of flowers and foliage. Thither priests in gorgeous vestments bore the statue of the Blessed Virgin, and the altar steps were covered with a fragrant carpet of carnations, on which, outlined in crimson and white pinks, appeared the monogram of our Saviour.

At the sound of the distant drums, my parents knelt down on the silken carpet placed for their devotions, and, after a moment of tense silence, a bell rang, and the sound of chanting awoke the ancient echoes of the château.

The beauty of this bygone scene remains with me as an imperishable memory; the atmosphere was impregnated with the mingled fragrance of incense, flowers and melting wax from the tall candles, the pallid flames of which flickered wanly in the sunlight; bees hummed around the altar, and the grey château served as a foil for the massed colour and gold spread out at its feet. God, Nature and Man met here in sweet com-

munion undisturbed by artificial emotions or by ornate display, and I partly owe to this early influence the love of the beautiful and decorative which is inseparable from my being.

The procession afterwards advanced towards the highest terrace of the château, from whence it reached the chapel, there to receive the benediction. This having been given, the sound of drums and brass instruments broke forth anew mingled with the mellow blast of our hunting-horns—a signal that the great adventure of the day was about to be undertaken.

The town band then proceeded to gladden our hearts with a program of vivid secular music, which my parents applauded in duty bound, insisting upon numerous encores. This tribute to their skill redoubled the efforts of the musicians, whose heated faces and bulging eyes testified to the thoroughness with which they performed on the wind instruments. At last, carried away by enthusiasm and gratification, the entire band rose *en masse* and beat time to the music with their feet, and in some cases the over-zealous pirouetted in the sanded walk of the terrace. This climax never failed to thrill my grandmother, who displayed almost childish pleasure whenever it occurred, especially if the conductor signalled out our family for recognition with an extra stamp of the foot accompanied by a beaming and perspiring smile.

My father praised and thanked the town band, and the festivities terminated with a punch *d'honneur*. The toast, "To France," was drunk with all due solemnity, and the château and the commune bade each other *au revoir*, with manifold expressions of goodwill.

My grandmother always insisted upon the necessity of blending religion with our daily life, and she never sat down to a meal without first making the sign of the cross before she touched a morsel of food. Every morning the Abbé Couvreux, her chaplain (who became her confessor after the death

of Monseigneur Dupanloup), celebrated mass in the oratory which the Duchesse de Dino had added to the one-time bedroom of Prince de Talleyrand. Here were to be found a collection of family souvenirs; the three bells were a present from General de Galliffet, the sacred vessels were given by the Duchesse de Courlande, and the illuminated canons were the work of the Comtesse de Saint-Seine. The relics (numbering amongst them a piece of the True Cross) were placed under a portrait of Monseigneur de Castellane,[1] Bishop of Mende, assassinated at Versailles in 1792, who died blessing his murderers.

A beautiful figure of the Blessed Virgin stood over the altar, a gift from the King of Saxony to the Plenipotentiary of Louis XVIII, in recognition of his having diverted the Prussian menace after Tilsit (1807) and again in Vienna (1815) from "absorbing" the kingdom of Saxony.

In the winter of 1878, I participated in a wonderful scene on the occasion of the election of Leo XIII to the Pontifical See. During the momentous conclave, my grandmother, before retiring for the night, prayed in the oratory, and we children went thither to wish her good night.

One evening a footman entered bearing a telegram which he handed to my grandmother. She, who guessed what it might contain, walked slowly towards the lamp, the rays of which illuminated the place of prayer. With her spectacles poised almost on the tip of her nose, and still holding her large cloth-covered missal with its many book-marks, the niece of Talleyrand opened the telegram. A breathless moment of silence followed, and then, her eyes shining with joy, and in a voice tense with emotion, she cried: "Blessed be God! . . .

[1] Monseigneur Jean Arnaud de Castellane was the brother of Michel-Ange, Marquis de Castellane, Chevalier du Saint-Esprit, Ambassador to the Porte, during the Seven Years War. Born in 1733, he was consecrated in 1768 in the private chapel of the King.

Lumen in cœlo"—thus announcing to us the election of Cardinal Pecci.

The curé was instantly apprised of the news, the nuns likewise, and our chaplain, our guests, the family and the servants sang a *Te Deum* together. Had we not cause to thank God, for would not a Pope endowed with the Latin temperament give great religious concessions to France?

Such were some of the various happenings which signalized my childhood. Religious duty was paramount at Rochecotte, in fact it may be said that religion was the foundation on which the château had been raised, for Rochecotte was indeed built on the solid rock of Faith. This excellent morale was destined to prove invaluable to me amid the tempests and wreckage of my later years, and thanks to the teachings and example of my beloved mother, I can now face any further troubles with the serenity so characteristic of both her and my maternal grandmother, the Marquise de Juigné, one of the sweetest and most charming of women.

My grandparents de Juigné represented the twentieth owners in the direct line of the estates which bore their name, and the love and respect felt for them by the peasants were personal as well as traditional. Mutual trust and forbearance were the watchwords at Juigné, and neither employers nor employed ever betrayed the confidence which, according to some level-headed people, was ridiculously Utopian. For instance, certain farmers held their farms for generations by word of mouth, the question of a lease never being raised; but in no instance was a failure of trust recorded. The steward, gamekeepers and servants held the same positions through successive generations, and the old and faithful servants shared the joys and sorrows of the family.

In those vanished days our servants were our friends; to-day

too much, and yet too little, education has transformed them into our would-be masters.

Our family were perhaps over-tolerant towards the idiosyncrasies inseparable from old family servants. For instance, one of our footmen insisted upon fishing in the small lake in front of the château, and not only did he consider that thirty years' service gave him the right to fish in "private waters," but he also refused to wear a coat whilst indulging in the pastime of Izaak Walton. It was useless to expostulate with Dezvardes or to tell him that we resented his untidy appearance; he simply paid no heed, and my mother, remembering his fidelity and honesty, forbore to command. None of our servants were able to say that they were treated *de haut en bas* . . . and, as a result, a complete understanding existed throughout the château.

Remembering these things, I am astonished at the legend prevalent in England concerning the French aristocracy of a bygone generation. The haughty aristocrat of the novel, play or cinema never existed, neither was he responsible for the Revolution, as seems to be so generally believed. The servants, in most cases, were the staunchest friends of the proscribed. Two of my own ancestors owed their release from the Conciergerie in 1793 to the efforts of their tenants and servants, who journeyed to Paris to demand, and to ensure, the safety of their employers.

Contrasts are usually both unpopular and unpleasing, but I cannot refrain from quoting the words of the Prince de Talleyrand, as being peculiarly applicable to the difference between Then and Now: "He who did not live in those days, is ignorant of the sweetness and simplicity of life."

One of the picturesque figures on my rosary of recollections is old Madame Mencion, whose parents followed my great-

grandparents as *émigrés* to Holland. Madame Mencion always went with my grandmother to attend early Mass, and afterwards drank her morning coffee at the château. Her faded eyes were in truth the windows of a beautiful soul, and the transparent whiteness of her face seemed to glow with the same flame. Madame Mencion wore a frilled linen cap *à la Sarthoise,* a pleated stuff dress, black mittens and felt slippers, and her Paisley shawl was carefully arranged so that one corner fell exactly in the middle of her back. When saluting my grandmother, she would gracefully spread her skirt out on one side holding it between her thumb and first finger, the little finger being well outstretched, and then, bending her feeble old knees, she executed a curtsy worthy of her traditions.

"Have I your gracious permission to be seated?" asked this sweet old person, and, permission granted, she would sit down to enjoy her *café-au-lait* in peace.

Her heart literally overflowed with affection towards the family so intimately connected with her own, but she never forgot their superior rank, and never presumed upon the strength of old associations. It did not occur to Madame Mencion to aspire to the *salon.* She knew her place, and, what is more, she kept it.

My grandmother, the Marquise de Juigné (*née* Montgaillard de la Valette), was a direct descendant of the celebrated Duc d'Epernon. She was an exceptionally gifted woman, and she took an active part in the education of her granddaughters, whose musical progress interested her so much that she gave them their pianoforte lessons herself. Madeleine de Juigné, who became later the Comtesse de Clermont-Tonnerre, was a hopeless proposition, as the poor child was seemingly unable to profit by my grandmother's instruction, and she was never able to master "The Merry Peasant," which she learned all over again each successive summer. Her elder sister Anne

was more harmoniously inclined, but I fear that the majority of the guests at Juigné must have occasionally consigned five-finger exercises and scales to perdition, as my grandmother withdrew to the library immediately after luncheon in order to superintend a practice which, unfortunately, did *not* ultimately "make perfect."

She possessed multitudinous interests, and during her excursions in the name of charity she had many amusing experiences. One day, when returning from a visit to a poor woman at Solesmes, she entered a farm-house to rest for a few moments on her homeward way. The farmer's wife was a lady endowed, according to gossip, with a very colourful past, who, after various episodes, had found repose and respectability in a belated state of holy matrimony.

The reformed one received my grandmother with a proper sense of the honour conferred on her by such a visit, and she lost no time in presenting her somewhat numerous offspring to the great lady of Juigné.

"These, Madame la Marquise," said she, proudly, producing two tiny toddlers and an infant in arms, "are my *lawful* children, but the others"—and with a comprehensive and contemptuous wave of the hand she indicated a group of four older children—"*these* represent my indiscretions."

The Marquise de Juigné, like my other grandmother, was a rigid adherent of duty. No middle course existed—a thing was right, or it was wrong, and she refused to entertain the idea of any compromise. It seems incredible, in the vacillating and tottering morale of present-day conditions, to believe that such a sense of duty existed, but it is nevertheless true, as may be proved by an adventure which befell my grandmother at Dinard in the summer of 1872.

It so happened that Madame la Comtesse de Paris was staying at Dinard with her children, the Duc d'Orléans, the Prin-

cess Amélie (afterwards Queen of Portugal), and the Princess Hélène (who became the Duchess d'Aosta), and we children often played with them on the sands, unknown to my grandmother, who did not like the Orleanist Princes. Her feelings, therefore, when she suddenly came upon us one day, may be better imagined than described, and, finding us in such "dangerous company," she proceeded forthwith to rescue us.

Madame la Comtesse de Paris, who recognized my grandmother, walked towards her, probably with the idea of exchanging a few commonplaces, and my relative thus found herself between Scylla and Charybdis, for escape was made impossible by a huge rock which barred her passage. She at once resorted to desperate measures. She straightway waded into the sea and remained up to her ankles in salt water until the royal lady had passed, thus avoiding any return of courtesies upon which her good breeding might otherwise have insisted.

Thus unbending adherence to conscientious principles is typical of Old France, the France whose evolution has been hampered by tradition, a system which has annihilated itself, rather than submit to what it considered humiliating conditions.

My grandfather, the son of a Castellane of the second branch, was endowed with great physical and moral distinction, and, as an ardent Royalist, he made no secret of his hatred and intolerance of present-day life. He recognized no National Anthem save the historic hymn "God save Henri IV," and I remember that he once kicked me soundly for daring to hum the Marseillaise in his presence. Was he not the son of that Marquis de Juigné who was compromised by reason of the political activities of the Duchess de Berri in favour of the Duc de Bordeaux after the July Revolution and on whose tomb is inscribed the poignant sentence: "Excluded from his rights

in the House of Peers on account of his refusal to take the oath in 1830"?

My strong-minded relative's dislike for Louis Philippe was likewise shown to Napoleon III, and in 1866, as a protest against the non-intervention of France in the Austrian question, he removed certain stone eagles which decorated the exterior of the stables. It was impossible for him to countenance anything that, even externally, might be connected with the Empire.

I relate this rather trivial incident in order to demonstrate an old man's stubborn adherence to his principles, an outlook shared by many others of his generation, but now obsolete. One of my grandfather's irrefutable precepts remains imprinted on the pages of my memory. "France," he said, "has known only two regimes: one of Tradition, the other of Revolution. The first has taken various forms. The monarchical conditions of Huge Capet were vastly different from those of Philippe le Bel. The government under Louis XIV had no relation whatever to that of Louis XVIII, but notwithstanding these things the actual monarchical idea remains the same. The Kings of France were forced to cede the necessities of existence in favour of sacred principles, but they deducted from these a universal policy, and this policy resulted in the establishment of the Tradition.

"The second regime, that of Revolution, destroyed law and order, and mutilated the generating motive. After 1789, the Revolution may be said to have been founded on the negation of Tradition. The First Empire, the Government of July, the reign of Napoleon III and the subsequent upheaval are only stages and degrees in one unvarying system of destruction.

"Ah, Boni," he continued, taking a pinch of snuff from a beautiful snuff-box decorated by Blarenberg, a present from the Duc de Doudeauville, "these transformations came from

different causes; the Jacobin principle was inseparable from the Bonapartes, the Parliamentary outlook was one with Louis Philippe, and the Revolution—the motive power of both—has put them into action, according to the demands of the hour."

This historic comprehension, born alike of experience and despair, was inseparable from the old home of my ancestors, repurchased by my great-grandmother, after the Emigration, for two crocks of butter and a bowl of milk!

Juigné, rebuilt in the reign of Louis XIII, experienced all the horrors of false architectural restoration when my great-grandmother once again took up her residence there. The old moat was filled in, and dreadful modern dormer-windows disfigured the ancient pointed roof. Here again the bad taste and disorder inseparable from any kind of anarchy defiled tradition. Nevertheless, in spite of these brutal wounds, Juigné was a picturesque spot; it always seemed redolent of the mingled odours of violets and raspberries, and its surroundings were delightful.

One spot in particular appealed to me: this was the little burial-ground close to the park, and I often went there with my grandfather, who never tired of relating the circumstances which had caused him to become disenchanted with life.

"I have now taken refuge in the kingdom of the spirit," he said, "and in solitude and meditation I find comfort."

Notwithstanding his habitual melancholy, my grandfather entered into all the childish joys and sorrows of his grandsons, and I particularly remember the peculiar sweetness and fascination of his smile. But, with the malicious cruelty inborn in most young children, I loved to ruffle his usually serene temper, and this always happened whenever I referred to his blood-relationship with Gilles de Raitz, the mediæval Bluebeard, whose Castle of Machecoul was the scene of so many sinister happenings.

However, as so often happens, the biter came to be bitten, and during the period of my matrimonial troubles I was taunted by the Yellow Press with the possession of this unpleasant ancestor, and my so-called "cruelty" was described as "Bluebeard's Legacy." I cannot lay claim to any peculiarity of Gilles de Raitz save one. He, like myself, was endowed with a passionate love of inanimate beauty, and in the old records of his life-story especial mention is made of his extravagant purchases of *objets d'art* with which he adorned his numerous castles.

My grandfather fortunately showed no signs of the eccentricities which distinguished his uncle, the Comte Jules de Castellane, eccentricities which occasionally suggested insanity. Whenever this odd individual invited his friends to any especial fête during the summer, he endeavoured to create a cool atmosphere by producing an illusion of falling snow, imitated by innumerable small pieces of white paper, which were showered from the upper windows of the château upon the astonished visitors.

He was a handsome man, and an extremely eligible *parti*, and so thoroughly sensible was he of his own importance that he once proposed marriage to a young lady in a letter, on the envelope of which was written: "Reply by bearer."

The years 1883 and 1884 saw my brother and myself included in the number of day-pupils attending the Stanislas College, but I retain no particular impression of the Marists who directed the Lycée, and a little later (before my Baccalaureate) we were admitted as boarders to the College of the Oratorians at Juilly.

Our tutor, the excellent Abbé Routaboul, stayed at the College for two years in order to be near us, and I am always glad to remember that my education actually began amid such historic surroundings.

The priests of the Oratory were the successors of those originally connected with its foundation by Louis XIII and Cardinal de Bérulle, the protector of Descartes. To-day this beautiful home of learning, one of the most ancient in France, constitutes itself the champion of national doctrine, so far as education is concerned, and the names of its most famous pupils include those of Saint Philippe de Néri, Massillon, Dotteville and Malebranche.

The Oratorians specialize in history, literature and science, and I remember with undying gratitude the teachings of Father Chauvin, Professor of French; his insistence upon my having a clear idea of a subject before developing it, and the taste which he inculcated in me for Horace, Boileau and the immortal "Letter to the Academy." He likewise pointed out the beauties of Fénelon, that saintly cleric, and, thanks to his influence, I assimilated something of the mystic romance of Juilly, which lessened the effect of the trivalities and vulgarities of the outer world, upon my supersensitive imagination.

But I was predestined to play an active rôle in the drama of life and I could not emulate the icy aloofness of my grandfather. I therefore tried to deaden the voices of the past, and I mapped out a course by which I regulated all my prudent or imprudent actions. It was impossible for me to follow the conservative example of M. Guidon, my uncle's former tutor, whose pleasing habit it was to expectorate audibly into his blue and white checked handkerchief whenever he attended High Mass and heard the words, *Domine salvam fac Republicam.*

Although the ideas which filled my head were far too serious for my years, they did not prevent me from enjoying the gifts which Youth brings in its train. But I was not very strong, and as I lived chiefly on my nerves, all that I did was not in

the nature of a sedative! Naturally inclined to be idle, I did not overburden myself with work, and I never found anything that completely satisfied me. It must be remembered that children as strictly brought up as ourselves must necessarily experience all kinds of reactions and temptations, and no outdoor sports are sufficient to restrain, or entirely to discipline, the adolescence and curiosity of any growing boy.

The various colleges which had hitherto contributed towards my upbringing offered me no amusements, and this lack of relaxation was not without its effects on my character. To this day I remember with a shudder two dreadful years spent with the Jesuits in the Rue des Postes; years which determined me in later life never to allow my children to undergo the same severities or to expand in such an atmosphere.

Little by little, this terrible regime drove me to subterfuge and duplicity. I disliked knowing that my letters were censored, so I posted them secretly and I became deceitful through force of circumstances. In addition, I learnt next to nothing, and I did not endeavour to improve my mind. Even my natural talent for mathematics remained in abeyance—instead, I indulged in a taste for surreptitious caricatures.

Every Thursday and Sunday we walked in an unhappy procession through the Bois de Boulogne, or occasionally in the direction of Vincennes: we hardly exchanged thoughts, as every look and every word were watched, and listened to, by a cold-eyed *surveillant.*

These walks became a positive torture, and whenever I caught sight of anyone I knew, I tried to hide myself behind my companion in misery, in order that no outsider should witness what I considered a pitiable state of humiliation.

But I soon forgot the evils which beset me when, on our holidays, we were allowed to belong once more to "our" world.

On these occasions, my brother and I rode in the Bois accompanied by two young friends, and as Parisian life was not then dedicated to the cult of the automobile, the Avenue des Acacias and the Avenue du Bois presented a brilliant spectacle during the season.

The Bois was a veritable fairyland of colour and beauty in the enchanted hour before dinner, as the great and the *demi-monde* endeavoured to outdo each other in their dress and equipages. I must frankly confess that the beauties with "pasts" attracted us much more than did the ladies whose characters were above suspicion, and the mystery and age-old allurement of the former aroused the intense curiosity which always surrounds women who have lived and loved, and who have no regrets. Perhaps the irresistible call of sex strove to awaken some answering chord in our hearts? I cannot tell, but the fact remains that we eventually fell desperately in love with a beautiful Unknown, old enough to be our mother.

This resplendent creature was graceful and elegant; she might have been a Creole, notwithstanding her magnolia-cream complexion and the dusky violet of her eyes which seemed to hold the riddle of the Sphinx in their inscrutable depths.

She was invariably accompanied on her drives by a Negress, who, strangely enough, in some ways facially resembled her. Our persistent admiration must have amused the lady, who was probably unaccustomed to seeing four boys in Eton suits followed by a groom always waiting in the same place to see her pass. Once or twice she looked into our faces, and her ironic, challenging regard completely devastated our peace of mind. We determined to pursue the profane love typified by this strange woman, and one day, acting on a common impulse, we started to follow her carriage at a discreet distance.

The lady was at first unaware of our presence, but the persistent sound of our horses' hoofs caused her to look round.

She then saw us, realized that she was the object of our attention, and gave instructions to her coachman to exceed the speed limit.

Undaunted, and regardless of the disapproving looks bestowed on us by many of our friends and relations (also driving in the Bois), we galloped in the wake of the Unknown. At the Arc de Triomphe the carriage turned into a quiet side-street and stopped before one of the decorous mansions in miniature, peculiar to the locality. The lady alighted, and we reigned up our ponies, hoping for some sign of encouragement or recognition. None, however, was forthcoming, save that the Negress angrily shook her fist at us. Then the great entrance gates closed—and we, like the Peri, stood outside our Lost Paradise. Hurt and angry, with the wounded vanity of youth smarting under the rebuff we had received, we decided to force an entrance. The eldest romanticist, a lad of sixteen, dismounted, rang imperiously, and after a few moments' delay we were admitted.

Our lady of allurement stood in the paved court-yard which was artistically embellished with tubs of orange-trees. A little fountain set in a basin of old Italian stonework played in the centre, and as the lady awaited us, my fantastic imagination visualized her as the châtelaine of some mediæval château—she seemed so different from the ordinary types of womanhood with which I was familiar. But I could not help noticing that she was apparently human enough to possess a temper, and she looked decidedly cross, although her eyes smiled when they met mine.

"Well, children, and what do you want?" she demanded curtly. "Run away home to your nurses. I've no use for little boys."

But were we disconcerted? Not in the slightest. "We have come, Madame," said our spokesman, "to tell you that you

have inspired us with a love the strength of which you cannot imagine. Please remember this and endeavour to prove yourself worthy of it." So saying, we bowed and left the enchanted castle with what we fondly imagined to be a tremendous show of dignity.

But—imagine it!—the woman was impudent enough to laugh at us! Nevertheless, it was with her that our first experience in love began.

After my boyish setback in the Bois, I shunned adventure, until I accepted the invitation of a charming woman to spend a few days with her and her husband at their country-place. The lady of the château had, so said gossip, passed many crowded hours, and her husband had not altogether approved of her methods of killing time. But, I gathered that his condemnation had resolved itself into acute resignation, as he showed all the outward signs of a protracted martyrdom. My hostess was a pretty creature, but I was attracted to her mainly by curiosity, and I could not quite fathom her feelings towards me. One evening after dinner, when we were enjoying a saunter in the park, she suddenly asked me how old I was.

"Eighteen," I said.

"What a pity you are not just a little older!" she sighed.

"But why? What does age matter?"

"Well . . . if you were older, you would understand women better than you do now."

"I shall never attempt to understand women," I replied arrogantly, "neither do I wish to. I shall love them all a little, and no more!"

"You are not very polite," said my friend, smiling ironically.

"Perhaps you would like to hear me say that I am thinking of you?"

"Why not?"

"It would not be true."

She advised me: "Tell a lie."

"Evidently that would be easy," said I rather impertinently.

My hostess was a woman of infinite variety, and, finding me intractable, she directed her attentions towards one of my friends—also a guest at the château. Immediately the wounded vanity and the dog-in-the-manger attitude of a young man vented itself in reproaches.

"Oh," said the lady, "there's really nothing to trouble over. I am merely educating Jean in the ways of love: he is destined for a woman I know who arrives to-night, and who does not fancy raw material."

She spoke truly, and the four o'clock train brought with it a charming blasée Marquise, to whom my hostess confided the young initiate.

We compared notes next morning, and we arrived at the conclusion that women were incomprehensible, and that love, as we had imagined it, was non-existent. We had both been the victims of experienced exponents of passion, and although the adventure left us with more understanding than we had hitherto possessed, at the same time it was barren of real enjoyment. . . . It was another disillusion.

Nevertheless, I had some amusing experiences. Young men all the world over fall in love with actresses; all men do likewise. One of my earliest affairs was concerned with a charming actress—let us call her Mlle. X.

I am sure that Mlle. X looked upon me more or less as a boy, because I was foolish enough to confide in her. The experienced lover tells his mistress nothing that is true about himself or his doings.

One afternoon, when I called at her flat, I was asked to wait in the *salon,* as Mlle. X was engaged with her *coiffeur.* It was a cold day, and as I stood warming myself before the wood fire I noticed a beautiful *pot-pourri* jar on the mantelpiece.

My artistic soul thrilled at the colour and the shape of this lovely stranger from far Cathay, and I mechanically lifted the lid to inhale the breath of the spices which I felt it must contain.

Alas! there were no ashes of roses, no faded blues of lavender, no orange stuck with cloves. The *pot-pourri* jar *contained nothing but a collection of men's white evening ties!*

I drew the one and only conclusion from these exhibits. I pushed them deep in the recesses of the jar, and I sat down trembling.

At this moment, Mlle. X, radiant and charming, made her appearance.

She saw that something untoward had occurred, but I would not enlighten her, and, as woman is ever an enigma, my silence made her my slave.

But I was perpetually haunted by the vision of the jar and its contents. It became an obsession. At last I spoke—but because my reticence was explained, Mlle. X's affection faded and died, as mine had done simply because I had discovered the surfeit of evening ties.

CHAPTER VI

The Comte de Chambord, the last descendant of the eldest branch of the Bourbons, died at Frohsdorf on August 24, 1883. Curiously enough, his decease occurred on the anniversary of St. Bartholomew, and with this royal passing, the Capetian tradition embodying the Divine Right and the policy of the State disappeared for ever.

Don Carlos, the Duke of Parma, and M. Joseph du Bourg were present when the Prince died, but General Charettes' over-zealousness was somewhat disturbing to the peace of the chamber of death. The general, who had deployed at the battle of Patay the Flag of the Sacred Heart and possessed it still, designed to cover the corpse of his illustrious leader with it, but the Comte de Chambord, like Charles II of England, took a long time to die, and the general actually entered the room flag in hand several times, before he could accomplish his pious purpose.

We received the news of the death of the Prince at Juigné, and the telegram announcing our supreme loss arrived during dinner. My grandfather opened it. Rising from his seat, he said in a voice broken with emotion: "My children, the King is dead. Let us pray."

These words, pregnant with meaning, told us that France—as we knew France—was no more. It was also the termination of all our hopes for the future.

We did not attempt to finish dinner. Instead, we went at once to church, there to ask God's help and protection for our country. My family all wore deep mourning: well might they

mourn, outwardly and inwardly! This death, coming as it did after the disasters of 1870, cast a veil of impenetrable sadness over the days of my youth.

Nothing was spoken of save the calamity which had befallen us; I felt like a plant deprived of light and air, and I should most certainly have lost courage had I not remembered the device of William the Silent: "It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake nor to succeed to be able to persevere."

Five years previously the Comte de Chambord had become reconciled with the Comte de Paris, but this member of the House of Orleans did not dare pose as the heir of the men who had made history in 1830, and, as writes Chateaubriand to Augustin Thierry, "change a crown which had been preserved amongst the treasures of Saint Denis for nine centuries, for a crown discovered for the first time in a dustman's basket." A second Louis Philippe with the blood of Philippe Egalité might have succeeded in imposing a monarchial constitution founded on a revolutionary basis, but the Comte de Paris preferred only to remember his descent from Henri IV. Thus, even less than the Comte de Chambord, he was incapable of carrying on the tradition of the Kings of France and of manifesting the true significance of their consecration at Rheims. The Comte de Paris, obsessed by conscientious scruples, adopted the only standpoint which he considered to be right, and lost both thrones.

The blow experienced by the Royalist Party in the elections of 1885 sufficed to prove that the mainspring of monarchy was, to say the least of it, faulty, and I have never forgotten the bourgeois cynicism of Thiers, when he uttered the memorable saying apropos of the monarchy: "To make jugged hare, it is esential to have a hare. The Orleanist Princes are only rabbits." The Orleanists, faithful to the absence of principle

which characterized the movement of 1830, were really Republican at heart.

"One calls them doctrinaires," said the Comtesse Jean de Montebello, "because they have no doctrine, just as we call people *poitrinaires* [1] who have no *poitrine*." [2]

The Comte de Paris died—an exile—in England, on October 6, 1894, and at his death those who regarded him as their King (by reason of devotion to his House, more than by love of him) experienced another disillusion! At the same time, the Catholic Party, misunderstanding the instructions of Leo XIII, split on the question of rallying to the Republic. The situation was excessively strained, and one day the Vicomtesse de Rayneval, ex-Ambassadress of France under Pius IV, discussed the policy of his successor with my aunt, Princess Radziwell.

"Oh," she cried, hardly able to contain herself with rage, "*c'est un Pape à part—un Pape à part—un Pape apte à tout.*" [3]

It is incontrovertible that during the last hundred years a sort of curse has fallen on the sons of the French sovereigns, who might have otherwise created dynasties. The Comte de Chambord perished, the King of Rome was a victim of destiny, the Duc d'Orléans, son of Louis Philippe, was killed in an accident, and the Prince Imperial exchanged the possibilities of the imperial purple for a soldier's death.

Nothing was more difficult than to create a new group which embodied the principles of old-time party spirit. All reconstructive forces appeared to have vanished—a condition of anarchy became general, and it seemed indeed, that the words

[1] Consumptive.

[2] Lungs.

[3] It is impossible to give the purport of the Comtesse's words in English . . . she was so angry that at last she ran her words one into another. The sentence must be read aloud in this way for its meaning to become clear.

of Chateaubriand must have been prophetic: "God has apparently taken away from the world all that elevates and beautifies the mind of man, because it is necessary for society to disintegrate, and in this way to work out its destiny."

My father and mother prided themselves upon never having attended the Court of Napoleon III: the frivolity, luxury and general abandon of the Second Empire were unutterably distasteful to them, and their keen perceptions showed them that the pinchbeck glitter inseparable from this regime was valueless in comparison with the elegance of the past.

The monarchial strength of the old regime was so great that it was impossible to destroy it until most of the aristocracy of that day had been guillotined—and even then it was necessary (in order to make its destruction complete) to sacrifice a King and Queen of France as well. On the other hand, imperial strength proved such a broken reed that it perished on the day of Napoleon III's abdication!

I was brought up from my earliest childhood never to forgive Germany for having proclaimed the unity of the Empire in the gorgeous home of our sun king, and from that day to this I have always looked upon Germany and her rulers with detestation. In accordance with my principles, I never went to the German Embassy. In 1902, when my cousins Prince and Princess Radolin represented the Emperor William II in Paris, the Princess persistently attacked me as to the reason of my refusal to visit her. "Ah," she would remark with her German accent, "I *must* ask you *something*," and the "something" was an explanation of my uncompromising attitude. At last she relinquished any idea of my conversion, but, like most women, she indulged in a mean revenge, and joined the pack of yapping curs who tried to rend me in pieces when I experienced the bitterness and desecration of my private life. But Princess Radolin's revenge has not touched my soul!

The majority of my generation had not the courage of their opinions and took refuge in a convenient neutrality. This was and is a fatal mistake: political hatred, founded on principle, is the most holy of all causes. "Thrice is he armed who has his quarrel just" is indeed a true saying.

If the Republicans had been really sincere instead of being revolutionaries, they would have been able to establish the right of popular acclamation in conjunction with the tenets of the Church. They would then have assured their position by coupling the *vox populi* with the *vox Dei*, and giving a modern reading to a question of authority by endowing it with the true principles of government.

But . . . those in authority considered it imperative to extinguish the light which has its source in God, and they ignored the great Architect of the Universe when they negatived Him in their Masonic conventicles!

Even if the Monarchy had been reconstituted in 1873, it could not have resisted the pressure arising from a European League which had foredoomed it to extinction. All things hold together in politics, and the Treaty of Frankfort, by establishing a new balance of power, modified the life principles of each government. The Europe of eighteen centuries, reconstituted in 1815, was shipwrecked when it became the victim of a misleading progress. On our continent Italy and Germany have arisen in the place of smaller States. France, mulcted of two provinces and deprived of her foundations, saw her own evolution retarded in this unfamiliar scheme. Nobody understood the situation better than the Comte de Chambord, who realized that these adverse methods in France, coupled with the European upheavals, would ensure no kind of stability for his prospective throne. A monarchy, he reflected, would only plunge France on a downward path, as Bismarck would prefer to indulge in a new war rather than

support a restoration, and in our state of feebleness and collapse defeat would have been a foregone conclusion.

After various vacillations and innumerable pretexts, the Comte went to Versailles accompanied by his faithful friend, Maxance de Damas. There he heard Mass at the Church of the Benedictines, and there, under the plea of not wishing to abandon the royal standard of France, he refused what had once represented the most brilliant throne in the world. The prince had arrived at the conclusion that the three lilies of the Kings, now emblems of the pact of our country with the superior powers, had been definitely replaced in Europe by three colours, significant of the alliance of France with Revolution.

The Comte de Chambord has been described as a visionary. What an entirely false description of him! Have I not heard Comte de Falloux, when criticizing his master, describe the Comte as "one who always put God's finger in his eye," or, as we understand it, *"Il se met continuellement le doigt de Dieu dans l'œil."* [1]

I fear that I have digressed a little from the primrose path of youth, in order to demonstrate the feelings of myself and my family towards the new regime. We could not and would not tolerate it, but with the death of the Comte de Chambord we realized how powerless we were to alter the existing conditions. I was too young, however, and too much in love with life to allow myself to become a victim of monarchist depression, and as I was fortunate enough to possess generous parents, life in Paris was made very happy for me.

[1] *Se mettre le doigt dans l'œil* = to be mistaken. God's finger is an illusion to the pious character of the Comte de Chambord.

CHAPTER VII

In the days of my youth, the army was the only possible profession for a young man of good family. Everyone we knew adopted a military career—it was a condition of our traditional hierarchy, and after my baccalaureate my parents informed me that I was to follow the example of my friends. Thus they sacrificed me to the tyranny of The Accepted Idea, instead of allowing me to follow my own bent.

I began my period of military service at Fontainebleau in the 15th Regiment of Chasseurs, after having passed my examinations at St. Cyr, and six months later I was sent to Sampigny. Alas! familiarity with my *métier* brought nothing but contempt and dislike for the station in life to which it had pleased my parents to call me. Fortunately, at the time of my experience under the flag, General Boulanger had replaced the four years' obligatory period of military service by three years, for which amendment I was devoutly thankful.

The first of May witnessed the very first fête given by the proletariate. Our official bourgeoisie was terrified. The troops, my regiment amongst them, stationed near Paris were summoned to the capital, and we marched by easy stages from Fontainebleau and encamped at St. Maur, near Vincennes, before entering Paris. I had asked several beautiful friends of mine to join me there to avoid the danger of the capital.

The fête became a red-letter day for me! It came in the veritable springtime of youth and nature when I breathed perfume, and my heart sang within me. Once in Paris, I

obtained leave, shed my military trappings, and straightway proceeded to enjoy myself. Two days after my arrival, Madame Porgès invited me to her cotillion, which she also asked me to lead. This was my initial adventure in a ballroom, but, judging from the audible comments passed on my progress by older exponents, I fear that I did not shine as a dancing partner.

Nevertheless, I enjoyed myself. I was young, full of the joy of living, and elated by the universal excitement caused by the exploits of our Minister of War, General Boulanger, who turned the heads of everyone, but whose only real stronghold was the Café Concert, and whose rallying song was composed and sung by a music-hall favourite. It was a period of delirium, when the sane became insane, and when even wise fools embarked on the adventure of this lost cause. The General, who was clever, used everyone to suit his purpose, men were intrigued by his showy brilliance, and women fell down and worshipped a representative of that Don Juan type which appeals to femininity all the world over.

I remember nothing of importance about my military service beyond my souvenir of Boulanger, and I was glad when it was over and I found myself able to taste life and be extravagant when by rights I should have been economical. Like most young men, I imagined that dissipation represented pleasure, but the experience of riper years proves the fallacy of such a conception. However, I never acknowledged my inevitable disillusions, and I preserved an attitude of aloof independence which made me somewhat unpopular in my "set." I was talked about, however, and was therefore greatly in request.

Some people called me a *poseur*, others a spoilt child, and I achieved social success without enjoying it, or profiting by its advantages. But already voices were calling to me across

the ages, until, irresistibly drawn towards all that art and literature represented in life, I found my earliest Mecca in the *foyer* of the Comédie Française. Here was a *milieu* which, although superartistic and Bohemian, insisted on the strict observance of its traditional etiquette, and permitted none of the laxity commonly supposed to be inseparable from the stage.

The portraits and furniture with which the *foyer* is embellished are part and parcel of these historic traditions, and one actually feels oneself in some old mansion in the Faubourg St. Germain, instead of behind the scenes in a Parisian theatre. Even the costumes worn by the members of the Comédie Française strengthen the illusion, and their richness and taste add a *cachet* to this environment redolent of past and present genius, where every bust that adorns the corridors is that of a celebrity. The whole atmosphere is suggestive of restricted freedom, and of an intellectual decorum which permits no liberties.

The actresses hold a court peculiar to themselves, where wit, luxury and allurement are paramount. These charming women rightly regard themselves as above the ordinary run of players, for does not the Academy acknowledge their genius, and do they not unite in themselves the mental gifts of the Muses allied to the feminine charms of the Graces?

How well I remember the infinite variety of Mademoiselle Bartet, now a delightful old lady of seventy-three; Samary, with her haunting laugh of happiness and youth; Suzanne Reichemberg, that incomparable *ingénue*, and the other fascinating personalities who received the homage of the fine flower of the French aristocracy, and the adulation of the great minds of literature and art!

My uncle, the Prince de Sagan, a most assiduous habitué of this famous *foyer*, was one of the best-known social celebrities of his day: he was exceptionally charming. In his

supreme elegance and distinction he was the personification of an aristocrat, with a nuance of the actor Gil-Pérès. The Prince was, in many respects, as gifted as any great diplomat, but he was likewise ignorant and he possessed no inclination for the things that really mattered. But he was endowed with a superlative *chic,* which manifested itself in his personality, in his movements and in his pose. It was even associated with his historic eyeglass and its black *moiré* ribbon. He was an adept in the art of pleasing women, for whom he had a great capacity for affection, but his moral sense was lacking; supple and feline, he dominated both the great world and the world of Bohemia with equal skill. A Prince by birth, he was also a Prince of fashion, and he doubled the rôle of a peer of France with that of the *compère* of a *revue.*

As a decorative adjunct to any great entertainment he was unequalled, and I always admired him in this capacity. While he delighted my artistic sense with his supreme artificiality, he appealed to my mind by reason of the hard brilliance of his conversation, and the importance which his personality gave to things of no actual importance whatever.

Comte Robert de Fitzjames was another man about town who paid homage to the charming members of the Comédie Française. He was a descendant of the saturnine James II of England, whose natural son, the Duke of Berwick, was the founder of his House. The Comte possessed something of the dark fascination of the Stuarts, and like them he was versatile, charming and a devotee of all women, although I believe he worshipped at one or two particular shrines sacred to Venus. A sailor by profession, he always seemed to bring something of the sea with him, and although he was extremely gifted, he did not concern himself with either literature or art. The Comte might easily have become notable in a less democratic era if he had troubled to maintain the position to

which he was entitled by his birth and his undoubted talents.

General de Galliffet, another habitué of this delightful *foyer*, was one of the most striking personalities of his day. Inclined to draw the long bow, he was also a supreme opportunist, but he was handsome and well turned out, and distinctly proud of his silver-plated stomach, which had been repaired in this manner after an unpleasant experience with a bullet. His attitude towards women was that of a bully, and he had a positive mania for discussing his most intimate affairs with his fair friends, who never dared resent his jokes for fear of his ridicule. The general, who had served under the Empire and won his promotion at Sedan, realized his dream of becoming a Minister when he entered the Cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau, who had seized the opportunity of including among his colleagues a general whose name counted for something.

General de Galliffet was essentially light-hearted, and this spontaneous gaiety was one of his chief characteristics. One morning when he was riding with my mother in the Bois, he passed Monsignor Bauer, an unfrocked priest whom he had known in the days of his youth, and who immediately recognized his former acquaintance. The general stopped for a moment, but instead of returning Monsignor Bauer's conventional greeting in the usual manner, he made an exaggerated sign of the cross—a form of benediction, which, to say the least of it, was not in the best possible taste.

What a crowd of phantoms haunt me in connexion with this period of my life! Amongst them is Charles Haas, the only poor Jew who has ever been accepted and loved by society: one met him everywhere, his sole Open Sesame being his marvellous intellect and his unerring intuition. I fancy that Haas must also have been the only well-bred Jew in the world who had no money, but his poverty mattered little. He was the friend of women, the confidant and adviser of celebrated men,

and the most sought-after person in the most exclusive *salons.* He belonged to that class of witty and ornamental individuals who represent the luxuries of the luxurious—those charming idlers with whom one gossiped before dinner at the Jockey Club, or else met at the Duchesse de la Trémoille's, and had Charles Haas been less of a dilettante, he might easily have achieved fame in a more serious walk of life.

The Duc d'Aumale was also frequently to be seen at the *foyer.* This son of Kings, and child of the Revolution, was an artist devoid of taste, a Prince destitute of power, and a diplomat who could not command the respect of diplomacy. The Duke mainly interested himself in hearing Mass, and, like the Duke of Cambridge, he followed the prayers as audibly as decorum permitted.

His château of Chantilly, acclaimed to-day as a sight to gladden sore eyes, is one of the worst possible examples of modern architecture: you enter it from the second floor, and proceed from thence to the reception rooms. Comment is needless!

The Duke was not lacking in wit of a somewhat acid nature. His nephew, Ferdinand of Bulgaria, chanced to visit him at the beginning of his meteoric career of sovereignty, but the slim grace of Ferdinand's youth had changed to corpulence. Uncle and nephew having exchanged greetings, the Duke surveyed the Prince of Bulgaria critically and remarked: "How greatly you have altered! Like the rest of Europe, I fail to recognize you."

Prince Henri d'Orléans, another nephew of the Duke, also honoured me with his friendship, and I remember him with feelings of real affection. He was young and handsome, although one of the most untidy individuals imaginable, but his great intelligence, his charm, his tenderness and his doglike

devotion made one forget his aversion to soap, and I never failed to admire the advanced ideas which he added to his traditional principles. He died in the Colonies, in the flower of his days, at a time when his star pointed to a wonderful political career, in which he would most assuredly have served France faithfully and well.

Comte Louis de Turenne was the most aristocratic snob I have ever encountered, and he was never so happy as when he found himself in the most exclusive *milieux*, where he talked foolishly, and invariably quarrelled with those who dared to differ with him. I have seen him everywhere during the last thirty-five years, and whenever I have seen him I have always tried to avoid meeting him again.

General de Galliffet, who was aware of my aversion to Comte Turenne, invented a sort of dialogue in which we figured as "Ben Turenne" and "Ben, Pas-chic-du tout."

The Marquis de Breteuil, on the contrary, was someone whom I always wished to meet, as he possessed infinite taste and infinite understanding. He was an intimate friend of the late King Edward VII, and it might have been inferred that he would have profited thereby, and occupied the position of Ambassador. But he never attained this end, his career negativing the truth of the well-known saying: "The friendship of the great is a gift of the gods."

The Prince of Wales and his sister have continued the friendship between the Marquis and their grandfather, and when the Prince was sent to France to perfect himself in French, he stayed for some considerable time with the Marquis and Marquise de Breteuil, and pursued his studies under their hospitable roof.

I think I can say with truth that the Marquis and myself were only rivals in all that touched on our respective *flair* for

art. The Marquis did not understand much about architecture, but was a connoisseur of bibelots, and he was never mistaken in his appraisement of them. But, like the majority of buyers, he possessed no idea as to the display of his purchases to the best advantage.

All my friends and acquaintances were to be seen at the Française, and there is nothing in the world to compare with this *foyer* of the historic House of Molière. Hither come aristocrats, ministers, ambassadors, men of genius and the leading lights of art and literature and learning. It constitutes alike a temple of the Muses, and an altar on which burns the sacred fire of perpetual adoration to Venus!

I did not, however, confine my social attentions to the *foyer* of the Comédie Française. There was another world, where the pale grace of bygone days was manifest; a world which only admitted those whose birth and bearing entitled them to the entrée of the world of exclusive Parisian society!

It was not violently gay, this world into which I penetrated at will. We danced on Sundays at the Duchesse de Maillé's; another great lady, then in deep mourning, lightened her bereavement by giving melancholy chamber concerts, and the Comtesse Siméon and her daughter, the Comtesse de Belbeuf, had their recognized "evenings." The Duc and Duchesse de Doudeauville entertained us with sumptuousness, and the Duchesse de Luynes kept open house at Dampierre, Cannes and Paris all the year round.

In other houses, whose owners were more cosmopolitan, we met royalties and a goodly sprinkling of royal highnesses.

The Comtesse Edmond de Pourtalès, whose beauty time was powerless to touch, was one of the most brilliant figures of her day, and she was, literally, the uncrowned Queen of Paris. She had played an important part under the Second Empire, and her friendship with Princess Metternich is almost historic.

Nobody was more charming than the Comtesse; she positively exhaled affection; Kings, Emperors, millionaires, statesmen, artists, savants were included in her circle where they hung upon her words, lost in admiration of her wit and fascination.

I remember meeting King Oscar of Sweden at one of her receptions, and for a few moments I mistook the King for Paul Déroulède, so greatly did he resemble my compatriot. The King had previously dined with the Comtesse in company with my sister-in-law, Comtesse Jean de Castellane, and he had given her the accolade as a relation of her first husband the Prince of Fürstenberg. He did the same to the Princess Murat as his cousin. It was amusing to see how much these ladies appeared to value this privilege.

One of my earliest appearances as a dancing man was at the Comtesse de Kersaint's ball, where the male guests were asked to wear coloured dress-coats. I profited by this "command" to appear in a pearl-grey coat with sky-blue *revers*, and a rosebud as a buttonhole: I have since imagined that I looked slightly ridiculous!

One of the most curious *salons* sacred to the great world was that presided over by my great-aunt, the Comtesse de Beaulaincourt, a daughter of the Maréchal de Castellane. Her first husband was the Marquis de Contadès and she had once been an extremely pretty and much courted woman. She was now old, and had discarded the satins and muslins of her youth for a sombre gown of black silk, worn in conjunction with a white linen apron, edged with Valenciennes lace. My great-aunt had one hobby (which unkind gossip described as a mania), the fabrication of artificial flowers. These she made on one especial table in the *salons*, which as a rule was littered with gum bottles and tubes of green paint, and in order to reproduce nature as faithfully as possible, the Comtesse or-

dered daily supplies of freshly cut roses and carnations to be sent to Paris from her château of Acosta.[1]

The guests of my flower-making great-aunt were always to be found on the other side of this hedge of colour, paint and perfume. Here one met diverse types of humanity, from those peculiar to the Faubourg St. Germain, to those who were once the friends of the Empress Eugénie, notably Princesse Mathilde, whom my great-aunt had known at the Tuileries when her second husband occupied some diplomatic position under the Empire. Emile Ollivier was one of the habitual guests, and I remember hearing him vindicate his share of responsibility in the events subsequent on the second of January, 1870. On another occasion he discussed at length the primary causes of the Franco-Prussian War.

Princesse Mathilde at the end of her life was better known under that name than that of Princesse Demidoff. Thanks to her *salon,* she occupied an important standing in Paris. She was said to have been beautiful, but at this time she certainly had not an imperial aspect. Although surrounded by artists, and playing the rôle of a Mæcenas, she had very bad taste. Her house on the Rue de Berry, upholstered in plush, and furnished in the Napoleonic style, was hideous. In her portrait by Benjamin Constant, she looks like one of those *ouvreuses* they have in the French theatres. She only lacks the cap and the pink ribbons which they usually wear. I often saw her later at my aunt's with the Empress Eugénie. There was a marked difference between these two royal ladies.

At the time of which I write, the American invasion of Parisian society was practically unknown, but a certain Mrs. Moore who hailed from the United States had nevertheless

[1] Acosta is a small château in the Department of the Seine et Oise, between Saint-Germain and Nantes, built in the eighteenth century by the Marquis de Castellane, who was rescued by his servants from the Conciergerie in 1793.

succeeded in making her presence felt. She was a curious individual, who possessed no claims to beauty or wit, but who nevertheless attracted people to her house, an attraction due to a judicious mixture of amusing devilment and the more charming qualities of an angel. . . . I always visualized her as a sort of vulgar Fairy Godmother, one as cunning as a fox but never really malicious, while her natural extravagance was balanced by various economies.

Mrs. Moore's house was admirably adapted for entertaining a world which had long since dispensed with the usual conventions. If we wanted to make a noise, we made a noise—nobody troubled, and one night the Duc de Morny, who was bored by the music provided by his hostess, passed the word round, and by way of protest the guests threw the chairs and rout-seats out of the windows into the garden! The terrified orchestra, realizing that serious music was not in demand, saved the rest of the furniture by hurriedly playing a waltz.

This eccentric American was gifted with an almost supernatural art of complete understanding: she knew exactly the person one most wished to meet—and you found yourself beside her at dinner—a thing unheard of and hitherto unstudied in society. In this way Mrs. Moore's guests were enabled to exchange confidences, and to listen to others equally interesting. Mrs. Moore excused her methods by professing complete ignorance of French etiquette; but everyone gloried in her mode of bracketing guests, and had no desire to see any alteration.

One evening Mrs. Moore suddenly broke into loud and hopeless weeping, and, like Rachel, she refused to be comforted. Interrogated as to the cause of her distress, she managed to convey in a sob-punctuated sentence the alarming news that she had swallowed one of her teeth! Unfortunately the guests laughed, which not unnaturally roused her to fury, but in the midst of her paroxysm of tears the butler approached her

chair and remarked, in a dignified and consoling stage whisper: "Madame has no need to worry. Her tooth is on her dressing-table, where she will find it after dinner."

Mrs. Moore invariably seated her husband between two men at dinner, under the malicious pretext that he would then have no temptation to flirt! When at last her unfortunate partner sought in heaven that repose which his wife's restless progress had denied him on earth, Mrs. Moore immediately left Paris, giving instructions to the *concierge* to tell any callers that she and Mr. Moore had gone to Pau, the real meaning of her words being that she had taken her husband's body for burial in the country of Henry IV.

I was still young enough to enjoy the freedom and untidiness of this odd *ménage*, but I gradually recognized its uselessness, and I did not frequent Mrs. Moore's entertainments as often as I had done hitherto, yielding place to certain political men who were attracted by the topsy-turvy love peculiar to the house.

Apart from the perpetual surprises which one met with *chez* Mrs. Moore, Parisian society was not devoid of psychological interest and ironic humour; notably in the cases of certain old ladies whose pasts were common property. They attended Mass regularly, and still levied toll on their former lovers, by taking round the offertory bags and forcing them to disgorge —not in the name of love, but in that of charity. The generality of women were witty, and I once heard a good story concerning a love-drama which had just thrilled Parisian *salons*. A Monsieur N. had chanced to surprise his wife demonstrating the artistic possibilities of her bedroom to a young man at a somewhat unconventional hour, and the would-be-connoisseur had at once beaten a precipitate retreat. Unfortunately, he had apparently forgotten that most bedrooms possess doors as their accepted exits, and, choosing the window instead, he miscalculated the drop, and being thus, metaphorically, given

HÔTEL DE L'AVENUE DU BOIS DE BOULOGNE

enough rope, at once hanged himself. At any rate, the fall broke his neck.

When the hostess of the hour had finished this tragic recital, a pretty woman who seemed strangely distressed turned to a young man who was sitting beside her, and said in accents fraught with tense meaning: "Now, dear friend, *after this, you positively must go in for gymnastics.*"

French society has undergone many changes since this period, and through not understanding the necessity for judicious selection, it has developed into the Capernaum of to-day. It is the same in the country as in the capital: old tastes and pursuits have no place in modern life. At one time, the French aristocracy indulged in shooting, they loved good horse flesh, they interested themselves in the lives of the peasants on their estates. The *mise-en-scène* of a shoot was part of the life of any nobleman who enacted the rôle played by so many of his forbears, and everyone recognized his position and his value in the decorative scheme. In short, the sound of the hunting-horn united all classes in a bond of sympathy, and the traditional division of the "kill" maintained the charm of old seigniorial customs. Alas! I saw this condition disappear—first with the Puysegurs in the Forest of Chinon, and afterwards with my own people at Rochecotte.

I fear that honest and healthy enjoyment will soon be as *démodé* as the tourney of the Renaissance! The horse, man's noblest and greatest conquest, is valued nowadays only as a money-maker on a race-course. His accepted uses are replaced by mechanism! A château is often only another name for a hotel, its original purpose has disappeared, and our peasants have either become indifferent to us or have openly declared themselves our enemies.

After the mortification of seeing so much that has saddened me in our national life, it is not surprising that I have also

been able to forsee the annihilation of the class to which I belong.

In the provinces, as in Paris, our former prestige has suffered irreparable loss. Even in my early days, my sense of this loss aroused my atavism to such an extent that I experienced a disgust for things in general which is seldom felt by a young man of my age. This may to some extent explain the extravagance for which I have been condemned. Nothing touched me, and if occasionally, under some undeserved trouble, I became the prey of feelings of useless revolt, I regretted the condition as soon as it had arisen. Everything was so hopeless!

Man is primarily an animal, and instinct calls him when reason alone should advise him. The victim of a chaotic world, I accepted its responsibilities with real terror, but it was imperative to live. I have succeeded in doing so at too great a cost, and my efforts have left me exhausted. My contemporaries imagined that they were born to command, they could not endure the knowledge that one of their class dared to be original. So I left them severely alone, and I busied myself in fulfilling my destiny.

In any kind of loneliness, one has most need of friends, and I have appreciated from the depths of my soul those rare beings who have sympathized with me, for through them I understand the supreme value of disinterested friendship. Love, alas! is only another name for war, but friendship is synonymous with peace. I associate myself, therefore, with the latter.

But I am showing myself as a misanthrope, and forgetting that young Boni de Castellane who ruffled it at the Princesse de Léon's *bal costumé*, as the Maréchal de Saxe. I was entirely in my element; I loved the gorgeousness of the period, and I wore its habiliments as to the manner born. To this day I can recall with artistic enjoyment my *pourpoint* of white cloth with its gold enbroideries, my high boots, my decorations (carried

out in precious stones), my purple cloak heavily trimmed with sable, my powdered *perruque* and my feathered hat. I *was* Maurice de Saxe, I had always been he!

Shortly after my debut as a Maréchal, I decided to join the Jockey-Club, as its membership gave one a certain *cachet*, and my grandfather, the Marquis de Juigné, had acted as Vice-President for several years. But I sensed jealousy. I was right—I was blackballed, although the status of my sponsors, Comte Jean de Beaumont and the Marquis de Lauriston, was unassailable. Nevertheless, this setback in no wise lessened my opinion of myself, and I was welcomed as a member by some of the most exclusive clubs in Paris. I reflected that nobody excites antagonism who does not possess marked individuality, and I appreciated myself more than ever on account of the active hostility which I inspired. I was undoubtedly an odd young man, but in many respects I was innocent of sowing the wild oats which are the prerogative of youth. I never, strange to say, fell prey to the wiles of Cytherea, although I claimed the acquaintance of many ladies of the *demi-monde*. What a world of luxury, beauty and elegance these fallen angels represented! Their caprices, extravagance, debts and lovers made their generation happy; they lived and moved in a spirit of keen competition, in which the level-headed triumphed, whilst the more sympathetic suffered.

These beauties without birth or lineage were more exacting than the most exclusive Duchess, and as the majority insisted upon being taken quite seriously, they were often regular martinets in etiquette and the question of precedence among them occasionally presented a difficult problem.

It so chanced that one evening I entertained several representatives of this ancient profession, and just before dinner was announced a heated discussion arose as to who should enter the dining-room first. An inspiration seized me. "Let the

oldest go first!" I cried. "Surely that is her exclusive right by all the laws of courtesy."

But nobody stirred!

The most exclusive set in the *demi-monde* comprised Katinka (a lady with a myriad pasts), Fanny Signoret, Miss Cléry, Alice Howard, Lucie de Kerne and the famous miniature Venus, Fanny Robert. These belonged to a class of society which now barely exists. It was then very different, as every well-known man in Paris considered it his bounden duty to add an expensive mistress to his *menus plaisirs.*

One day one of my friends was driving with one of those princesses who was not very true to him. After having deposited his master at his club, the coachman was told to go to an address which was that of another lover. The coachman drove her to the place indicated, but, furious at seeing his master deceived, he said, as she got out of the carriage: "Madam, I bring you back to your real home—the pavement!"

To-day many charming society amateurs have entered into competition with these equally charming professionals, and as a result "Othello's occupation's gone." Millionaires from the Argentine, potentates from far Cathay, the new rich who have hitherto only followed the accepted idea of middle-class married love, all of whom, apparently, like to proclaim that they can pay for the expensive adventures—these alone protect the Daughters of Joy from starvation, and it is as well that they do so, since if all men shared my distaste for love represented as a purchase, it would be non-existent!

I do not wish to minimize the attractions of these ladies, and I remember Liane de Pougy, ethereal and dreamlike (and yet how practical!), roped with priceless pearls, Emilienne d'Alençon playing with her performing white rabbits at the Cirque d'Eté, and Otéro, arrogant, glowing, all-conquering, one of the biggest liars imaginable.

I am by nature extremely hospitable, and fortune favoured me when I was able to rent the Baronne Silvera's charming châlet in the Pré Catalan, where I often acted as host to pretty women. This woodland retreat was enclosed by a low railing, and separated from the ordinary road by a high bank between which flowed one of the little brooks common to the Bois de Boulogne.

The interior of the châlet was chiefly furnished with comfortable divans and an abundance of cushions, from which I stripped the red twill covers, replacing these horrors with blurred silks and the most attractive colour harmonies imaginable.

Notwithstanding that I often received Duchesses there, the aspect was rather suspicious. Sometimes I grouped together ladies of society, sometimes actresses.

One night I gave a dinner in honour of the beautiful Wanda de Bonoza, the talented girl who made such a brilliant debut at the Comédie Française, and whose beauty appealed to my nature so strongly that I felt it imperative for me to study it in a romantic environment, far from the glitter and noise of the city that applauded her.

Outside, a Tzigane orchestra discoursed sweet wild melodies, hidden in the shadows, and pale Venetian lamps glittered like fireflies in the ebony blackness of the trees.

Suddenly my guests and I became aware of a growing murmur of voices, and, somewhat to our dismay, we discovered that the orchestra had attracted a crowd of woodland undesirables, certainly not Pan and his followers; instead, a varied selection of budding Apaches, night-loafers and homeless vagrants were about to invade our little kingdom.

I saw the gleaming eyes and the fierce faces of the human wolves who wander in darkness, and they stood immovable and expectant before the lighted façade of the chalet where

Wanda de Bonoza reclined on her silken cushions, her white fingers heavy with jewels.

Wanda showed no signs of apprehension when she heard the hum of conversation outside develop into a low growl of menace.

One, bolder than the others, leapt the intervening ditch and flattened his evil face against the window.

An inspiration seized me; I resolved to appeal to the chivalry which exists in the heart of every criminal. I told Wanda to rise from her silken cushions. She obeyed, wondering.

I flung the partially closed glass door open and ignored the lurking Apache. I led Wanda de Bonoza and the little coterie of guests into the garden and we faced the waiting wolves together.

The actress looked more than ever like a Pagan nymph, and her exquisite face and her diaphanous draperies made her appearance positively ethereal.

At the sight of this lovesome creature, who represented the unapproachable and much desired woman on the horizon, dreamt of alike by nobleman and vagrant, a low murmur of admiration arose, and then the wolves vanished silently into the darkness.

CHAPTER VIII

My father and mother were, as the world counts riches, fairly wealthy, but my grandparents were still living, so we were not in the full enjoyment of our revenues. Nevertheless —and let me ease my conscience with open confession—my allowance was totally inadequate for my requirements! Money has always had the faculty of flowing in the similitude of a swift and shining torrent through my welcoming hands; it never cares to remain with me even as a guest. It is always "Hail and farewell!"

One cannot change one's inborn characteristics. Certain people are born misers, and they take to bare-faced economies as greedily as a thirsty cat laps up milk. Others display two personalities, one generous, the other mean: I know a wealthy Englishman who invariably buys gloves for his wife at fraudulent "sales," simply because he gets threepence per pair off the advertised price, but who lavishes hundreds on youth, shingled locks and short skirts. The question, What constitutes real economy? is as unanswerable as the riddle of the Sphinx. In my opinion, it is simply a question of one's personal outlook. The woman who buys expensive furs considers that she saves money because she lives in a small villa and keeps a disproportionate number of servants. It is impossible to lay down any rules—and even if such rules existed, no one would ever adhere to them.

My imagination, unfortunately, has always outrun the actualities of life: it is no fault of mine that I was born with extrava-

'gant ideas, but as I had supreme confidence in my star, I always believed that I should find some way of enjoying the necessaries and luxuries of existence. I have never visualized *one* thing. In the far-off days of which I am writing I did not regard myself as the owner of any *single* possession. I always thought in plurals. I dreamt of horses, palaces, castles, yachts, works of art and wonderful adventures. I had learnt the fascination and magic of colour, I had revelled in the perfection of form, I had fraternized with Art, and I had been rewarded thereby mentally and materially. At the age of twenty, I was absolutely cognizant of values, and I knew enough to enable me to buy and sell antiques most advantageously.

I shall always believe that a passionate love of beauty is a direct result of tradition, but my inclination has led me to speculate as a business man, and to spend like a Medici! I was the first of my class to make money, inspired perhaps by the want of it, and by the knowledge of the comfort which it represents. Truly, the first heavy fall of snow makes the wolves come out of the wood!

My flair for collecting was, however, not sufficiently strong to prevent me from indulging in the outdoor pursuits associated with any healthy young man. I hunted for two successive winters at Pau, content with very mediocre mounts, because riding has always been a passion with me.

It was quite impossible for me to become a typical hunting man, and, in my opinion, men who adopt hunting or sport as a definite career are in danger of developing into the most boring individuals imaginable, as they do nothing at last but drink and sleep.

Doubtless any active outdoor existence tends to kill the beast in man, but whilst stilling the voice of the beast, it numbs the soul and destroys intelligence. *It simply tires one out!*

This non-appreciation of hunting incited me to travel, and,

as all roads lead to Rome, I decided to visit the city whose name in my childhood was always synonymous with either hate or love. I left Paris, in February, 1892, and broke my journey at Florence, where I stayed as the guest of my uncle and aunt, the Comte and Comtesse Charles de Talleyrand.

The Comtesse, a charming and witty Russian, manifested the attractive qualities of the Orientalism inseparable from all true Russians, and her husband, who had formerly been Ambassador to St. Petersburg, was a brilliant diplomat possessed of rare distinction and intelligence. My aunt adored music, but an unkind Fate did not permit her to shine either as a performer on the piano or as a singer. However, she possessed infinite patience, and no sense of her shortcomings, so she was quite happy. She had likewise a passion for jewels, and delighted to deck herself in barbaric pieces in which the size of the precious stones had been, apparently, the first consideration.

During my visit to the De Talleyrands, I made the acquaintance of a Russian friend of my aunt, a *passée* old princess who at once invited me to spend a few days at her villa in the country. My aunt informed me in confidence that her friend (notwithstanding her grey hair and advanced years) still possessed the wild heart of youth, and was for ever seeking fresh woods and pastures new, in company with some favoured young lover who invariably left her to finish the excursion alone.

Princess X led her life more or less as she pleased, and she completely ignored the existence of her husband, who played the part of a shadowy and inoffensive third in the princely *ménage*. But it once chanced that the Prince thrust his presence on her in a very disturbing manner. This was due to the culinary vagaries of a new *chef*, which afflicted his master with acute indigestion during the small hours.

The Princess, unknown to her husband, was likewise incom-

moded, and, their two minds obsessed with a single thought, they both went at the same moment in search of brandy! They met in the corridor, and the Princess, who had almost forgotten what her husband was like, absolutely failed to recognize him without his wig and his teeth.

The Prince, who likewise met his wife as a stranger, imagined her to be a burglar, while the Princess assumed he was a highly suspicious character. Startled and terrified, the two old people at once called for help, but something in their respective voices awakened memories of the days when they led a more united existence, and they recognized each other by sound, though not by sight. Explanations followed, fortunately in time to prevent an awakened household from witnessing what was, after all, a most unfortunate instance of mistaken identity.

The Princess had a curious habit of covering her face with a mask of raw veal during the night, and I unexpectedly penetrated the mysteries of her toilet, in the music room, attracted thither by distant harmonies, and the prospect of an amusing *tête-à-tête*. Imagine my surprise when I found my hostess courting coolness in a lace chemise, her face encased in raw veal, and her legs bound puttee-wise with elastic bands, in order to preserve their symmetry! She was singing happily to herself, and she was in no wise disconcerted by my intrusion. In fact, the Princess straightway forsook song and treated me to a long dissertation on the Virtue of Veal, and the efficacy of elastic bands!

I must confess that Florence as a city somewhat disappointed me: it was no longer the vital centre of the Medici, and it appeared to be enveloped in an enervating lassitude which destroyed its former prestige. But the old-time wonders still survived in the museums, where the paintings and sculptures typified the actual history of the country, and where one did not

receive the impression of the display of "samples" so inseparable from the museums of Paris and Rome.

Italy, at the time of which I write, was under the heel of Crispi (and Germany), so the French met with little or no sympathy. Luckily for myself, the high rank and influence of my hosts prevented me from experiencing the incivility usually shown to my compatriots, and my non-political acquaintances were altogether hospitable and charming. I especially remember the brilliant receptions at the Torigiani Palace, and those given by the Comte della Gheradesca, a descendant of that unfortunate Ugolini who made the historic observation that he was obliged to eat his children in order not to deprive them of a father!

From Florence to Rome is not a far cry, and, once in Rome, I fell under the sway of the "holy bells." So, at least, Veuillot describes them, adding: "Rome has given us these golden voices and their divine language in order that blessings may descend from heaven in a wave of angelic harmony of the faithful."

I was more charmed by the "colour" of the Eternal City than by its historic monuments. I had hitherto pictured Rome as a vast hive attracting all the peoples of the world by its honeyed sweetness. There was not a vistage of comfort in the Hotel de Rome, the cooking was detestable, and its only salvation lay in its heretical outlook towards a Tzigane orchestra and a Winter Garden.

The town of the Cæsars was then quite different from what it is to-day: there were few large hotels, no "new" quarter, no statue of Victor Emmanuel, and no law courts. But I prefer the old Rome where the great Pope Leo XIII reigned at the Vatican and King Humbert I at the Quirinal, a Rome where I was on terms of equal friendship with the "blacks" and the "whites."

Certain of the Roman Princes had kept their palace gates closed since 1870, as a protest against the powers that were, and these sombre residences were so impregnated with melancholy that they reminded me of the violet cloth which is thrown over the cross on Good Friday—one hardly dared face such unhappiness without crossing oneself.

But my soul was profoundly stirred when I visited the Vatican, and after passing through the bronze door, I found myself in the presence of the Holy Father, who had honored me with an audience. Directly I came face to face with the great spiritual head of the Church, I fell on my knees and my heart beat to suffocation. . . . It was the greatest moment of my life.

The Vicar of Christ was a frail emaciated man, but majesty was written on his waxen face, and during the celebration of Mass when he turned to recite the *Dominus vobiscum*, his eyes shone with the divine fire of another world.

His Holiness conversed with me at some length, making special mention of his souvenirs of Talleyrand, and of my grandmother Castellane's relations with Gregory XVI and Pius IX. He then took my hands in his own, and in the sweetest, simplest words he blessed me and my family.

The majority of the Palazzi retained a *cachet* peculiar alike to them and to their owners, and I like to recall Princess Palaviccini and her magnificent setting in the Palazzo Barberini, now, I believe, the residence of the Spanish Ambassador. The Princess, with her white hair and noble bearing, might easily have inspired Largilliere. Infinitely regal did she look in her grey satin gown, covered with priceless Venetian lace with here and there a diamond clasp flashing its multicoloured fires.

One evening when dining at the Palazzo Barberini, I noted an old lady of seventy and a prelate of seventy-five seated side by side. They both happened to suffer from rheumatism in the feet, and, being unable to endure the pain, each quietly

dispensed with the offending shoe during dinner, purposing to retrieve it at the end of the meal. But "the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley," and the Duchess mistook the prelate's shoe for her own, leaving one several sizes smaller in its place. The exit of the sufferers from the dining-room was not picturesque, and they were mercilessly chaffed over the new development of the game of hunt-the-slipper, the Princess remarking that as the lady belonged to the Quirinal, and Monseigneur to the Vatican, it might have been said with perfect truth that they had stepped into each other's shoes!

I wished to be received by King Humbert I and Queen Marguerite, and they most graciously accorded me the honour of an audience. Some days later, I was invited to a court function, thus obtaining the entrée to the highest society; but I cannot say I was impressed. The court was simple, the royal palace was on a par with the Elysée, there was no "atmosphere," and the etiquette was essentially bourgeois. Their Majesties were extremely pleasant, and I was not disillusioned over the beauty of the Queen, who fully justified her title, "The Pearl of Savoy."

During my visit to Rome, I experienced a repetition of the senseless jealousy with which I was already familiar, and Prince Z. in particular singled me out as his especial quarry. Z. finally decided to humiliate me in public, and in order to arrive at this worthy end, he arranged with Don Mario Raspoli, the eldest son of Prince Poggio-Suazo, the Syndic of Rome, to lend me a tricky mount, in the hope that I should be thrown in the hunting-field.

I was forewarned of this pious plot, but I decided to accept the offer of the horse, which faithless to its owner, carried me like a bird! From that hour my persecution ceased!

During that wild ride, I was not wholly preoccupied with sport or the possibilities of my mount, and I could not divest

myself of the philosophic spirit. It seemed so incongruous that red-coated riders should gallop over the Roman Campagna and desecrate the Appian Way and the ruins of the undying past in pursuit of a poor fox which might seek sanctuary in the catacombs amidst the ashes of the saintly departed. "What curious manifestation of modern conditions!" I thought. "What a complete negation of the past! All that is sought is a pleasurable condition of nerve-excitement."

Before I left Rome for Naples—that city of lascivious beauty where abandonment of morality is more or less obvious—I had the honour of being presented to King Victor Emmanuel (then Crown Prince) at Princess Pignatelli's. This was my last meeting with Italian royalty, for the time being.

From Naples I went to Capri, there to revel artistically in the marvellous Grotto, the gardens and the vegetation. It is a spot where religion exists as a curious *mélange* of superstition and faith. At Palermo I worshipped the beauty of the Palatine Chapel, that exquisite combination of Byzantine and Gothic architecture, the interior of which is jewelled with the most wonderful mosaics in the world.

I was courteously entertained at Palermo by the Prince of Trabia, at whose Palace I had the unforgettable joy of hearing Nellie Melba's golden voice. The Prince arranged a concert in the old theatre of the Palazzo, a *mise-en-scène* full of the fascination and haunting grace of the past, and I shall never forget the effect produced on me by the sight of the mysterious interior lit by innumerable wax candles, where Nellie Melba's heaven-sent voice rose like a lark from the shadows, and soared higher and higher to meet the awakened echoes.

After Sicily, Monte Carlo. Here I stayed several days, until, nauseated by the trappings of vice, and the odour of putrefaction disguised as perfume which blotted out all the natural beauty of the locality, I returned once more to Paris.

In the month of August, my friend Jacques, Duc d'Uzes, was killed whilst attempting to cross Africa from East to West, and his brother Louis asked me to go with him to Lisbon and meet the corpse of the Duke, which was being brought there by sea for burial in France.

We arrived at Lisbon in conditions of almost tropical heat, and were welcomed by King Carlos II and Queen Amélie, who did everything possible to help us in our sad mission.

Queen Amélie is best described as an exquisite mother. Her beauty of soul is combined with a physical beauty which time and many sorrows are powerless to affect, but she has never been rightly understood or valued by the country of her adoption. In that lies her tragedy, and the tragedy of her House.

After taking leave of my friend, and paying my last respects to the dead, I remained in Lisbon alone, and visited the principal objects of interest of which, notwithstanding the earthquake of 1755, many still remain. I admired the splendid Abbey of Belem, the Palaces of Ajuda, Composta and Nesessidades, and the stately home of the Duchesse de Palmela. But I was most impressed with Cintra, the country palace of the King, a fairy-like building which I first saw bathed in the light of the setting sun from which it emerged like one of Gustave Doré's dream-castles.

A steep, winding road, hewn out of the chalk, leads to the palace, which is built on a naturally fortified mountainous site, the sombre rocks of which are covered with a mantle of verdure, studded with scarlet flowers. The road passes under a tunnel which leads to the donjon in front of the Court of Honour, and the great grey stone building lifts its lace-like parapets to heaven on three sides. From this altitude it is possible to see the sinuous Tagus and the distant sea against an iridescent horizon.

Quantities of glossy laurels grow near the entrance, and Bengal roses fling themselves in a riot of perfumed colour against the rock, and even adventure to climb the pine-trees, perhaps trying to protest against the submission of their native land to the glorious dynasty of Avis. Who could have imagined that Portugal would ever experience the horrors of Revolution? When I remember the kindness and goodness of King Carlos and Queen Amélie, I picture Cintra as a paradise destitute of Angels!

The interior of the palace cannot compare with the beauty of the exterior, but I admired the magnificent silver plate by Germain, given by Louis XV to King Joseph of Braganza. A more sumptuous collection illustrating the art of the silversmith is not to be found in Europe. What will be the fate of these treasures? Will they be dispersed (like so many others) to the four winds, bought by the new rich, or carelessly displayed in American museums? What a pathetic destiny for helpless Beauty to be tossed like a shuttlecock from one side of the world to the other!

On my way back to France I broke the journey at Madrid and, being imbued with the spirit of Donoso-Cortès, and inspired by Balmes, I was quite willing to find myself in sympathy with the soul of Spain. What wonders the capital of Iberia contains! But as the only hotel at that time constituted a blot on civilization, it was impossible to remain there, and I could therefore make but a superficial inspection of this magnificent city.

The treasures of the Museum of the Prado, however, fired my imagination to such an extent that I determined one day to possess similar *chefs-d'œuvres*, and my castles in Spain may be said to have had both their figurative and literal origin in this visit to Madrid.

Almost immediately after my return to Paris, M. de Hitroff

invited me to supper at the Cerole de l'Epatant, "to meet the Duke and Duchess of Teck." They were a remarkably handsome couple, and it is impossible to give any adequate description of the Duchess's charm of manner. She radiated kindness, and her smile was irresistible. I was also presented to Princess Mary of Teck, a tall golden-haired girl with a wild-rose complexion and a great air of distinction. Now beloved in England as Queen Mary, she is the perfect embodiment of the ideal wife and mother, and the greatest gentlewoman in two hemispheres.

Montaya, the celebrated singer of the *Chat Noir*, sang several sentimental songs and ballads associated with Montmartre, and who can forget his rendering of *Les petits pavés* and Delmay's *Noël?* Queen Mary most certainly has never forgotten it, and only last year at Ascot she reminded me of our first meeting, and recalled the charm of Montaya's exquisite vocalization.

I was determined to get the best out of life, and although I knew that my unusualness often made me the subject of ridicule, I preferred to be unusual.

I went to Trouville to join some of my beautiful friends to whom I had given rendezvous.

During my travels in Portugal, I had bought an enormous large grey felt hat, with a flat brim, like the hats worn by the *toreros.* I wore it at the races, to the astonishment of everyone, and I was asked whether I had come there to fight the bulls. I did not then understand that you must not look too strange if you don't want to be laughed at.

I began to amuse myself tremendously, but so far as women was in question, I was, let me admit it, torn between my love of woman as woman and my fear of her as a dominating force. In short, I fled from what I most desired. I could not endure the thought of becoming a slave to my passions or a victim of an exaggerated sentiment.

In this manner, I was an enigma and a disappointment to

women, notably, I fear, to a certain friend of Comtesse L. who, temporarily separated by diplomatic reasons from her husband, sought consolation in my sympathetic understanding. She was not pretty as the world counts prettiness, but, what is infinitely more important, she possessed charm, and I realized that although she did not appear indisposed to accept homage, she had hitherto never permitted her affections to be seriously disturbed.

But in our case heart spoke to heart, and we knew that we were likely to become more than attracted by each other: we met constantly, and I still preserve an ineffaceable souvenir of D. as I saw her in the Forest of Chinon, her red habit blending harmoniously with the grey trees and the mists of a November morning. At the sound of the View Halloo I offered to give her a lead, and as I galloped I occasionally turned in order to see that no harm had befallen my companion. She was an intrepid horsewoman, and I soon sensed that she, like myself, felt actual physical enjoyment when the frost-filled air stung her cheeks and the wind caressed her with ungentle hands. This intoxication of life established a sort of pagan understanding between us, and it required very little to kindle the eternal flame on the altar of Passion.

We were to stay in a week's time at a château where we had both been invited as guests. But the diplomat returned unexpectedly, and when next we met, paganism was replaced by a sort of puritan domesticity, mingled with a little natural jealousy on the part of D.'s husband.

I really cared for D.; of this I was certain, since I often thought of her, but when I saw her at the Duchesse de ——'s I determined not to allow her to become indispensable to me . . . so we indulged in a pitiful game of cross purposes. With D., pride triumphed over paganism, and with me the love of

freedom was paramount to the love of woman. In this way, our forest-idyll terminated—never to be renewed.

I still see D. on the day of our parting—I had purposely not kept my last appointment with her, and womanlike, she persisted in asking those fatal questions, Why?" and "What have I done?" She was evidently distressed and apprehensive —her usual composure had deserted her, and she seemed bewildered by my forced coldness. Little did she realize how much I longed to tell her that I loved her, and yet how greatly I resented her domination!

In this way I sacrificed desire to caution. Many of my later sentimental shipwrecks have occurred simply because attainment invariably means the complete loss of any further interest in the person by whom I am attracted.

Nevertheless, I and my comrades were really young at that time, and devoid of the snobbishness and unwholesome pleasures of certain boys of to-day. Our temperament and our taste for romance sometimes led us astray and each one thought he was playing the rôle of Don Juan. This, I think, is pardonable at an age when even nature deceives youth by giving it the illusion of being on the verge of conquering the world.

It was then that an adventure happened to me which I will relate, not from any wish to boast, but because it seems to me to have the eighteenth-century flavour of an Italian comedy and the charm of a *conte drolatique.*

A certain Miss X was to marry one of my friends, and I was invited to witness the signing of the marriage contract at her father's house.

The fiancée was charming and full of youthful exuberance, and in the middle of the conversation, when she was expressing her pleasure at seeing me, she asked: "Are you free next Wednesday?"

"Yes," I replied. "What can I do for you?"

She answered: "I am going to be married on Friday, and if you like, we could meet next week."

She did not seem to understand how far this meeting might lead us, but we made an appointment, which I kept, full of expectation. A week later, we met again at the same *rez-de-chaussée.*

But this time the giddy girl had ordered her carriage and footman to fetch her.

I thought I was secure from all intrusion when suddenly the bell rang. I looked through the keyhole and saw (oh, horror!) the lady's husband and her footman, who evidently wanted to come in. I plunged into my overcoat, the lady put on her hat, and we quietly disappeared out of a back window into a court which was separated from a second court by an iron railing.

It was winter, it was snowing! I began to climb over the rails, like St. Christopher, with my burden on my back, but unluckily my coat caught on a spike, the cloth rent with a dreadful ripping sound, and St. Christopher's burden pitched unexpectedly over his shoulders on to the pavement.

Luckily my friend was more frightened than hurt, but I can still hear her moans. I hailed a cab and sent her home. For myself, I vanished into the darkness, and I regret to say I did not worry in the slightest about the watchful husband.

In due time he returned from his fruitless vigil, cold, tired and cross. He found his wife (as might have been expected) in her boudoir, from which, owing to the inclement weather, she had not stirred all day.

CHAPTER IX

One of the first congratulatory telegrams which we received after our marriage was sent by H.R.H. the Duc d'Orléans, who asked us to come and see him immediately on our arrival in England.

Monseigneur had always shown me particular kindness, and I not only admired his courtesy but also felt the respectful love and devotion for him which Henri IV is credited with having inspired in his subjects. The Duke has always possessed qualities essentially royal, and he knows the art of making himself agreeable from A to Z; indeed, had fate so decreed, he would have gone down to posterity as one of the most popular Kings of France.

The Duke is clever, charming and attractive. Tall and finely built, his bright eye and pointed beard are reminiscent of Francis I, whilst his drawling voice is peculiar to the Bourbons, and his brother, the Duc de Montpensier, who was equally handsome and charming, was almost the "double" of Le Grand Condé.

The most striking feature of the Duke's character is his steadfastness—a most necessary quality for any monarch—and with the Duke this is especially marked in his political views, although he has not the gambler's spirit which sometimes favours the cause of the royal "pretender." He represents, however, one of the most striking individuals of his day, inasmuch as he always gets the best out of life. Everything he does, from big game shooting to love, is on the grandoise scale. The Duc d'Orléans is, moreover, extremely clever and well-

bred, and it is matter for congratulation that he has completely recovered from his recent dangerous illness, which has caused his family and friends so much anxiety.

Anna and I lunched with His Royal Highness at the Savoy, and, as may be supposed, our table was the observed of all observers!

We did not make a long stay in London but returned to Paris. Here the first tiny cloud of misunderstanding obscured my matrimonial horizon. I had already noticed that Anna was inclined to be jealous, but, manlike, I imagined this phase to be more or less peculiar to prenuptial conditions! I was disagreeably surprised to find that in this case her jealously manifested itself over a dog, which she thought liked me better than it did her.

Day by day, evidence of my wife's curious self-satisfaction became more and more apparent. She was the pathetic victim of the Gould tradition that the sun rose every day on purpose to hear the Goulds crow! Anna was utterly unimpressed by rank. She disregarded it completely; it mattered nothing to a Gould—she was sufficient unto herself.

The first letter I opened in Paris was from Arthur Meyer. It was a bulky epistle, stamped with an enormous cock and containing quite a volume of reasons as to why I should advance a million to finance the *Gaulois*.

At first I was rather surprised, and this unexpected request left a certain feeling of embarrassment between us which engendered some reserve in our relations.

For some time afterwards, Arthur wondered how best to approach me, and one day he decided to call on me.

He had been told that I was suffering from an attack of appendicitis; as a matter of fact, I was lying in bed with an ice-bag on my stomach and I was obliged to receive those who came to see me in that position.

The Infanta Eulalia was amongst those who came to inquire after me, and during her visit the celebrated director was announced. He did not expect to meet a Royal Highness sitting by my bedside, and he was so disconcerted that instead of kissing the hand of the Princess, it was on my hand that he pressed his purple lips.

I burst out laughing.

Arthur Meyer had a pink nose, and his eyes were the same colour. His only remaining hair grew quite close to his neck, and he rolled it into one single reseda-coloured curl round his bald skull, reminding one of those wire and bead wreaths which are generally placed at the foot of a hearse.

Always elegantly dressed, he wore during the day a shiny top-hat under which one could see, from behind, a sort of half-moon of skin between the hair and the edge of the hat. And in this way his head looked exactly like an astronomical map of the world.

Very amiable, although shy, and infinitely obliging, his mainspring of life was the *Gaulois* which, instead of serving his ideas, had become a necessity to him.

He spoke of me kindly in his book, "Forty years of Parisian Society," but the banality of his compliments never succeeded in gaining my friendship and, although we were apparently on good terms, I could never understand why he constituted himself the champion of throne and altar.

He married Mlle. de Turenne, and on that occasion I received a very funny letter from him which showed plainly his embarrassment towards me:

"You will probably send a present to my fiancée," he wrote, "in which case kindly direct the taste of Mme. de Castellane to a small travelling-bag which you will find for the sum of 200 francs at Leuchar's, Rue de la Paix. This would give me great pleasure."

From Paris we went to the Riviera in search of warmth, sunlight and life, and we were soon in the midst of the smart crowd which in those days was far more amusing and exclusive than it is to-day. At Monte Carlo, we dined with the Duchesse de Leuchtenberg (*née* Skobeleff), a sister of the general, and I have never met a woman whose beauty was so literally radiant! "Radiant" is the only word to describe her, as she seemed actually composed of concentrated light. The Duchess was especially kind to Anna, but, for that matter, my wife was fortunate enough to find many real friends in this attractive *milieu.*

On one occasion, the Prince of Wales signalled us out for especial recognition. We were dining at one of the smart restaurants, when His Royal Highness, who was just coming in, stopped at our table and chatted in a very friendly fashion. Is it to be wondered that I felt it lay in my power to show Anna a wider and more interesting side of life? And my pleasurable anticipations were increased when the Prince invited us to the regatta.

At Cannes, I introduced Anna to my aunt, the Princess de Sagan. She was a very imposing individual, and her proud and rather disdainful beauty always reminded me of the pictures of another haughty lady—Fredegonde, Queen of France. The Princess was charming, but a little terrifying, and I "felt in my bones" that she was much piqued and disappointed that Anna had not married her second son.

I must confess that I affected the airs of a conqueror when I paraded Anna through the crowd of pretty and curious women who were anxious to meet my American bride. One and all expressed themselves willing to assist her in her Parisian debut, but I shrewdly suspected that they protested too much, and that the claws of these charming cats were only temporarily sheathed!

We dined with the Duchesse de Doudeauville to meet the old Duchesse de Maillé, my grandmother de Juigné's great friend, before returning to Paris. I was glad that Anna was able to make her acquaintance, as the Duchess was extremely pleasant to look at, her white hair and cameo-like features giving her the appearance of a portrait by Nattier. The Duchess was very friendly, but her brusque manner might have tended to make any young wife, except Anna, nervous. But Anna, as I have said, was sufficient unto herself. She entered our world of traditions from out of a world absolutely destitute of them, and she made no attempt to understand the French temperament in those early days any more than she made any attempt to understand *me*. Even my amiable parents found it excessively difficult to meet her on any common ground of understanding.

Life in Paris did not therefore always make for happiness. Personally, I was the object of curiosity, jealousy and suspicion, and as my amazing marriage was epoch-making in the Faubourg St. Germain, it gave me in consequence a more or less factitious importance.

Everyone prophesied that this Franco-American union would not prove a success—and, as it happened, popular opinion has been correct.

I was assailed by many petty attacks, notably on the occasion when I and Charles Duval put up my brother-in-law for election at the Polo Club.

I had imagined that George's money and his admirable taste in horse-flesh would be acceptable to the Cercle, but I was mistaken. George Gould was blackballed, simply and solely from jealousy, the club having decided to show that it was impervious to the lure of dollars.

America alone is responsible for the one-time outcry which invariably occurred whenever an heiress of the country mar-

ried a foreigner, and the unfortunate man was at once described as a fortune-hunter, whose sole aim was to restore the tarnished glories of his escutcheon. It is true that our private fortunes are not on a par with those of many heiresses, but I shall always contend that there is a great deal to be said in our favour. If American wives endow us with their wealth, we, for our part, give them in exchange, besides a name, something which their money is powerless to purchase—a tradition and a taste which their superficial education does not give them the power of obtaining for themselves.

I admit that my own experience has not been fortunate, but I am inclined to attribute my ill luck to the fact that I was the first of my class to adventure in this manner, and that in those days American girls were far less enlightened and understanding than they are now. Americans formerly were nothing more or less than tourists—to-day they are cosmopolitans. Dividing their year between London, Paris and New York, they now become infinitely more acclimatized to the ways of the Old World.

Any man who marries an American girl under these happier conditions does not court disaster; instead, he has every reason to hope that his marriage will prove an unqualified success.

About this time, the Duc d'Orléans gave us another proof of his friendship by inviting us to the wedding of his sister Princesse Hélène with the Duc d'Aosta, which was solemnized at the Church of Kingston so identified with the exiled members of the House of Orléans.

It was indeed a strange setting for a royal wedding: the little grey stone church was hopelessly modern and insignificant, but within its walls were gathered the noblest names and the bluest blood in France. Madame la Comtesse de Paris, who was still in mourning, wore a gown of grey *crêpe*, and her noble and imperious profile was strangely akin to the wax

model of Louis XIV at Versailles. The Duc d'Orléans, who had met with an accident, was carried into the church on an invalid chair, and a pathetic melancholy seemed to pervade the assembled guests; there was something inexpressibly grand and touching in the spectacle of these royal exiles, gathered together in this humble church in a Protestant country, with only a handful of faithful adherents to bear them company.

The tall young bride, who dominated everybody, was a worthy daughter of her house, and rumour had it that she might have been Empress of Russia or Queen of England had she not refused to exchange the faith of her forefathers for that of a would-be husband.

Shortly before the celebration of Mass, a trumpet-blast announced the arrival of the Prince and the Princess of Wales, who had driven from London with their children in order to congratulate the newly-married couple. I must say I was "artistically" grateful that they had done so, as the royal carriage, with its outriders in their scarlet liveries, gave a touch of colour and picturesqueness to an otherwise somewhat sombre ceremony.

The Duc d'Orléans afterwards received the wedding guests at a magnificent reception at the Savoy. All the English royalties were there, and I had the honour of being presented to the Princess of Wales, a vision of beauty, wearing wonderful diamonds and pearls. Other notable figures included the Duc d'Aumale, the Prince of Naples and the golden-haired blue-eyed Infanta Eulalia of Spain.

On our return to France, the Duc d'Aumale did us the honour of inviting us to Chantilly, where we lunched in a corner of a long gallery at a table surrounded by high screens in order to create the impression of a small dining-room. After luncheon, the Duke showed us the palace and his wonderful collection of souvenirs, and as we passed the portraits of the

Kings of France, our host indicated several of them in a rather amusing manner. "This is my father," said he, pointing to a picture of Louis Philippe. "These are my ancestors," he remarked, as he showed us a series of earlier monarchs, and, wonder of wonders, "This is my uncle," thus alluding to an excellent presentment of Napoleon, and I then remembered that the great little Corsican was related to the royal house through his marriage with Marie Louise!

The Duke's liberal opinions made him greatly in sympathy with my father's outlook, and his insistence upon the value of tradition appealed to my mother. As for myself, although I admired and respected him, I could not help regretting his lack of the artistic spirit. Like all the Orléans, the Duc d'Aumale knew nothing whatever about architecture.

Chantilly constitutes a blot on the landscape, and the gardens and fountains, which belong to another age, alone save it from artistic damnation. The stables, etc., likewise are excellent —mute witnesses of an era when building was the profession of noblemen, and art that of princes. To-day Chantilly is the property of the Institut de France, and M. Paul Bourget acts as the Conservator of Property bequeathed to the Institut under the will of the Duc d'Aumale. It has already proved a profitable investment, as the golf club brings in a good return, and much of the land has steadily increased in value since the Duke's death.

As my father and mother insisted that Anna and myself ought to visit Rochecotte in our rôles of newly-married de Castellanes, it was arranged that we should go thither, after a visit to Juigné, as my grandmother had not yet met her new granddaughter. At Juigné nothing untoward happened, but certain of our old servants, and some of the nuns who were bidden to welcome us, were frankly astonished at my

American wife, and bitterly resented her seeming lack of interest in people and things.

From Juigné we went to Rochecotte, and by this time Anna was in a thoroughly bad temper. She could not and she would not tolerate the harmless curiosity which she had aroused, and she declared she would not endure a repetition of it at Rochecotte. This attitude was most unfortunate, especially as the Province was not too well pleased at my marriage, and the newspapers had not hesitated to say so. Everyone was on the edge of anticipation to see what sort of an American I had married.

My mother had arranged a wonderful home-coming for us; the school-children formed up in procession headed by the schoolmaster, and the young girls, educated at our expense, escorted us to the château from the railway station, to be joined *en route* by the authorities, who were awaiting us to present an address of welcome. Everybody was gay and happy, and the air was melodious with the sound of our folk-songs. My dear old Abbé Routaboul actually wept tears of joy; it was impossible for anyone to remain unaffected by such a sincere welcome.

A triumphal arch, gay with bunting and wreaths of coloured paper, had been erected at the entrance to the park, and when we reached the terrace at Rochecotte, a crowd of boys and girls sang the old song, "It is the village fête, when every heart is gay," with great gusto. I looked at Anna, hoping for some expression of pleasure. None was forthcoming—she was unmistakably bored!

That evening we entertained the country-side. Every lady present wore fearful and wonderful examples of cameos or hair-work jewellery, and necklaces of irregular half-lifeless *perles* replaced the matchless "tears" without which no American would consider life complete.

Here again Anna did not understand our customs, and hardly deigned to smile on or to thank the honest people who congratulated her at intervals during dinner. Truly a nerve-shattering experience, although my mother had tried to make it Gouldish by inviting Edwin Gould, Mrs. Gould and a couple of relations to make a foursome! But the clan was totally unimpressed by our village festivities. . . .

In justice to my wife's family, I must admit that they were not entirely to blame. No sentimental ties exist in America between the people and their superiors: everything is purely business. No traditions blend history and romance together, and nobody has time to be interested in the doings of his or her neighbours. From that day Anna disliked Rochecotte with an ever-smouldering hatred. Notwithstanding the "drags," the hunt, the charming visitors from the adjacent châteaux, and the pleasures of a simple life, she was deaf to all appeals to remain at Rochecotte. And, with ever-growing dismay, I realized that she would never consent to lead our patriarchal *vie de famille*, when during part of the year we made Rochecotte our communal home. She was essentially modern, and could not be expected to waste civilities on women who were not dressed by Paquin and Worth, and whose gowns merely represented the humble creations of Tours and Saumur.

However, I had my consolations in life. The voice of inanimate beauty was even now calling to me across the ages. As I do not appreciate money except to spend it, I determined to exchange some of my American dollars for certain tapestries which I had long wished to buy. I therefore hurried off to Giraud, the famous dealer of the Faubourg St. Honoré, to see whether he still possessed the glorious Bouchers which he had bought at the Gunsburg sale.

Those marvellous Gobelins in tones of blue and pink, bearing

the royal arms of France, represented pastoral scenes depicted with delicious feeling and freshness, and seeming to breathe the sensuous charm and artificial grace inseparable from the period to which they belonged. Exquisite tapestries, embodying the conception of the *artist* and the talent of the *worker*, they compromise two large pieces, each representing a pastoral, and, when ill-natured gossip busied itself with my falling fortunes, the Bouchers were always alluded to as my "Folies Bergères."

M. Guiraud welcomed me in the nature of treasure trove, as the sensation of my marriage with millions had preceded me to Paris, and everyone was curious to know how I should spend them. Nobody, needless to say, credited me with a desire to become a patron of arts!

I suppose I must have secretly amused the famous dealer, I was so terribly in earnest, so anxious to buy, so young, and, to him, so inexperienced. I had already changed my letter of credit, and my pockets literally bulged with bank-notes. I pulled them out by handfuls.

"Why, M. le Comte, you have become a Crœsus!" exclaimed M. Guiraud.

"What do you want for the tapestries?" I demanded.

"Two hundred and fifty thousand francs," replied the dealer.

"Here is the money," I said, and I began to count out my packets of notes; indeed, so greatly did I hurry that the floor was strewn with them. Guiraud could find no words!

The tapestries were folded and transferred to my carriage. I wanted to feel that they were mine *that very instant*, and I hurried away with my spoils. But—such is the irony of fate—the Bouchers never decorated any house of mine! At the time of their purchase we had no suitable residence in which to hang them, so they were packed away pending their removal

to an environment especially created for them. Unfortunately none was forthcoming, and one tragic day, years afterwards, I showed them to a dealer who "bought" for Pierpont Morgan. The millionaire collector, like myself, instantly fell in love with the tapestries, and acquired them for 1,500,000 francs, of which the intermediary pocketed more than a million.

I was inordinately proud of the success of my first deal, and I lost no time in visiting the treasures shown by Chapey, Mannheim and Bourdariat. By this time every antique-dealer was on my track. The hunt was up! When I was in London for the Duchess of Aosta's wedding, I was followed thither by certain Parisian dealers, who did not wish their quarry to escape, and together we inspected the wonderful collections of Charles Wertheimer and Davis. At Wertheimer's, I bought Reynolds' portrait of Judge Dunning and his sister, afterwards acquired by Lord d'Abernon, and the following day I was vanquished by the charms of a lovely "unknown" in a white satin gown, surrounded by musical instruments. I could not resist the pictured allurement of Nancy Parsons—the most beautiful Gainsborough in existence, and I finished a good morning's work by purchasing the original sketch for "The Blue Boy."

Thus in a few days I had spent a million francs without any trouble, and I owed a large amount as well. I was in no wise perturbed, it seemed quite natural for me to have money and to get rid of it.

On my return to Paris, I went to Sedelmeyer's to treat for a glorious Van Dyck—a portrait of the Marquise de Spinola wearing a crimson gown, and holding by the hand a child dressed in blue. I had already coveted the "red" Marquise when she was for disposal in New York, and I now bought her for a mere 120,000 francs. In due course, the Marquise, like my Bouchers, was acquired by Pierpont Morgan, and made her

home in America, obedient to a superior power whose reasons are not always easy to understand.

At Samary's, I bought Rembrandt's "Man in a Fur Cap" for 100,000 francs—another of my one-time *chef-d'œuvres* which is now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

I was, by this time, intoxicated with the power of purchasing. I was omnipotent as a buyer.

In pursuance of my dominant passion, I went back to London, and there I bought the wonderful "Morrison Table" from Asher Wertheimer. This famous *objet d'art,* which originally came from Russia, is composed of sea-blue marble, decorated with bronze ornaments by Goutière, and I selected a pair of celadon vases mounted by Gaffieri, to set off the beauty of my table to the best advantage.

As my wonders accumulated, and as my inborn *flair* for judging and purchasing developed, I became obsessed with the idea of forming a kind of art trust before prices became as high as I knew must inevitably be the case in a few years. If my scheme had materialized, I should have been one of the richest men in the world. But my brothers-in-law, who neither knew nor cared anything about art, were actively hostile towards any trust which did not touch metals or railways.

The Goulds and their hostility, however, troubled me not at all. Had I not made the acquaintance of a certain Ben-Guyat, to whom Lord Rocksavage had sold a wonderful carpet dating from the fourteenth century, which originally came from Lisbon Cathedral? This carpet measured twenty yards in length, and it was ornamented with wreaths of acanthus on a rose-pink ground, interwoven with golden inscriptions. I bought it for 80,000 francs—a trifle in comparison with its value to-day!

Some days later I discovered a marvellous buhl clock at Jacques Seligman's. It was impossible for me not to acquire

it, and at Stettiner's a dinner-service of green Sèvres bought at Naples became mine—for a consideration! I could not help being weak as water where the famous "Crescent" cupboards were in question, which anyone can admire *chez* Hotchkiss, who ultimately bought them back from me for 500,000 francs. I likewise gathered in a few tables inset with Sèvres plaques, rare Chinese cases from the Folques collection, a set of silver soup-plates from the Demidoff collection, and a thousand and one similar trifles which combined to make my house one of the most wonderful museums in the world.

I had likewise offered 400,000 francs (no inconsiderable sum at that time) for the Crasse Fragonards, which fell to Pierpont Morgan, and for which, after Mr. Morgan's death, Frick paid metaphorically incalculable millions!

The fact that so many treasures of the Old World are captured by America causes me positive physical and mental distress, for the simple reason that American collectors have not the remotest idea how to arrange objects of art. They are in urgent need of a guiding hand and an unerring brain to assist them. These two qualifications they will never possess, for taste in such matter springs from knowledge founded in part on tradition and in part on a passion for beauty. Americans are, above all things, men of business, and value, not beauty, is the first consideration with them.

Although I am the most luxurious person in my expenditure, I am, paradoxically, the most simple of men, and if I were to be asked my conception of Paradise, I should describe it as a castle, always in course of construction, in which I should occupy one little bare room furnished with rush-bottomed chairs, and a large deal table on which I could spread my books and my building plans.

But—and there is always a "but"—this little room would open on vistas of artistic delight: great glittering reception

rooms filled with master craftsmen and skilled decorators for ever at work, and where painters and sculptors would occupy themselves unceasingly with new conceptions which I had inspired.

From the windows of my Paradise I should look out over an immense park completely in harmony with the construction of my castle, of which it would form the setting. Here marble columns, temples, summer-houses and statuary would blend with the general effect, and outside my gates I would build a town to be peopled solely by antiquarians and art-dealers. What a congenial *milieu* for Seligman, Kroemer, Davis, Duveen—and what a surprise for them to find themselves in Paradise!

A dull Paradise would be unheard-of stupidity, so mine must not be devoid of political disputes. Without these, any life hereafter would be entirely without interest for me. But my Paradise is somewhat in the nature of a castle in Spain, and my first experience of a matrimonial Eden centred round the mansion belonging to the Marquise d'Hervey de St. Denis, in the Avenue Bosquet, which we rented whilst our own residence was in course of construction. I was not too well satisfied with my temporary home, as its proportions were faulty and its high windows and mediocre staircase were not in keeping with the size of the rooms. However, we lived there for years, during which period I formed the nucleus of the famous collection which after my downfall was acquired by the museums and private collectors of New York!

Two of my sons were born in the Avenue Bosquet, and the birth of my eldest boy was a triumph. The public displayed unprecedented interest in the event, and I doubt whether any French baby has been so greatly talked about. Magazines and newspapers were full of photographs, and descriptions of the layette. Anna and I were eulogized as the most remark-

able examples of parenthood, but I was suspicious of such blatant flattery, and I rightly sensed a demand for payment in kind, which I found myself powerless to avoid.

The fact that Anna had given birth to a French son did not affect her outlook in the least.

I wanted her to be happy, and in honour of her twenty-first birthday I planned a fête, which I determined should equal any given in the glorious days of Versailles.

I took my uncle, the Prince de Sagan, into my confidence, and we decided to rent the Tir aux Pigeons and to erect a stage on the banks of the lake, as I designed to present an "illuminated" ballet of the most beautiful description. It was, however, necessary to obtain the sanction of the president of the municipal council, and to him we therefore repaired.

The worthy official's eyes grew wider and wider with astonishment, as my uncle leisurely unfolded our project, which it was impossible for his own imagination to visualize. He therefore took refuge in officialdom, and remarked tersely to me with evident irritation:

"Sir, be good enough to explain *precisely* what is the real object of this fête!"

I said never a word, but my uncle, adjusting his famous monocle, gravely considered our interlocutor in much the same way that an explorer scrutinizes a rare specimen of a savage—his impertinence was something at which to marvel. Then, smiling an icy and mocking smile, he addressed himself to the president.

"You wish to know the object of this fête, sir? This fête is given simply for our amusement," and he repeated the words "for our amusement" several times in succession.

I shall never forget the stupefaction of the prosaic official when he grasped the meaning of this amazing statement. The word "pleasure" must have loomed largely in his mental hori-

zon for many a long day, but he raised no further difficulties, and promised us an escort of mounted police in the Bois on the eventful night.

I had long dreamed of such a night of enchantment; my imagination had already pictured it a thousand times, and I revelled in the idea of the sheer and poignant beauty which I was about to create.

Eighty thousand Venetian lamps (made expressly for me at Murano) were dispersed in the dense blackness of the trees, where they glittered in the pale similitude of transparent fruits, and innumerable fire-fly lights outlined the walks and the avenues leading to the Tir aux Pigeons. It was a veritable illuminated highway, and I ordered sixty footmen in scarlet liveries to group themselves on the grass, as I rightly estimated the effect which this vivid patch of colour would produce. Belloir, the well-known upholsterer, had undertaken to supply the fifteen kilometres of carpet which would prevent my guests from experiencing the discomfort of the evening dew.

Owing to the death of Monseigneur le Duc de Nemours, I was obliged to postpone my fête for a couple of days; it was impossible to connect a display of fireworks with the passing of a Prince of the royal house of France! But the heavens were not in favour of the postponement, and they opened their sluices through which descended a deluge of tropical rain. Everyone was in despair—the fête was as good as ruined, but, with my sublime belief, I never anticipated that the moon would refuse to shine for me!

"Put down the carpet," I ordered, when at five o'clock the rain was still falling. "I'll take the risk!" And, sure enough . . . the clouds broke, the laughing blue eye of the sky appeared, a golden sunset came in the nature of a benediction, and—let me be truthful—the Tir aux Pigeons looked like a vast vapour bath!

I shall never forget Arthur Meyer's astonishment at what he termed my colossal impudence; his exclamations were a study in varying degrees of expression! And Gailhard, that cheerful Southerner who "managed" the opera, unhesitatingly approved of my methods!

We had sent out three thousand invitations, and a dinner-party of two hundred and fifty intimate friends preceded the fête. I had arranged that dinner should be more or less simply served in a large marquee decorated with red roses, and it gives me a certain pleasure to recall the girlish charm of my young wife as she chatted gaily with the Duc de Dodeauville and Baron Alphonse de Rothschild at our flower-decked table. But I was likewise amused, and interested, to see how little Anna was affected by the display and ultra-elegance by which she was surrounded! The guests represented the bluest blood of France, the *mise-en-scène* was unreal, superartistic and supersensuous, yet it might have been *anywhere* and *anything*, so far as Anna was concerned!

After dinner we disappeared into the woodland, and I especially remember the Comtesse de Greffuhle's wraith-like appearance as she floated, rather than walked, through the white mist that rose from the heated earth. The Comtesse had swathed her lovely head in a veil of softest gauze, which lost itself in the lace of her train, and two dark eyes like living jewels shone in the white rose pallor of her face. She might easily have been taken for that being of mist and moonshine, the Erl-King's daugther, who holds the souls of the unwary in her sway!

The Prince de Sagan was absolutely in his element—never had he been, or appeared, so happy. Everyone laughed at us as inseparables, and the saying went round that "if Boni knows his Sagan, Sagan likewise knows his Boni." [1]

[1] A play on the word "Boni," which in French can mean "bonus," *i. e.*, benefit.

THE FÊTE AT THE TIR AUX PIGEONS

Among the many interesting people present, I remember Camille Groult, who had made an immense fortune by manufacturing the little vermicelli stars and circles which float like buoys on the surface of clear soup. He was the most intelligent business man I have ever met, and, what is more, he knew how to spend his money artistically. His beautiful mansion on the Avenue Malakoff was a veritable museum of well-arranged exhibits. Indeed, M. Groult's artistic sense was so well-balanced that I used to say that he even saw that the very dust was in harmony with those objects on which it chanced to fall.

M. Groult's fantastic imagination led him to make a sensational entrée to my fête. He and his wife drove up to the Tir aux Pigeons in an open country cart, and, when the fireworks started, he liberated twenty-five white swans, which flew wildly in all directions, terrified, yet attracted by the lights and noise.

I have never seen such a fairy-like spectacle. It was a veritable feast of lanterns, colour and music, and nothing could have been more exquisite than the ballet, danced by eighty picked *coryphées*, whose swaying forms were reflected in the dark mirror of the lake, which was pierced with tremulous arrows of coloured light thrown by fountains of fire which played—for one night only.

The music was as superb as might have been expected from an orchestra of two hundred musicians, and at intervals the melancholy notes of hunting-horns awoke the slumbering echoes of the wood.

This memorable fête was the first idea of its kind to be given in Paris. Needless to say, its cost ran into thousands (to-day a similar entertainment would require a million), and I was naturally the object of much comment. Some people called me mad, others thought me a foolish spendthrift, others

described me as "original." I cared little for public opinion, and I remembered the precept of that admirable showman, Barnum, who opined that to be talked about was an essential in life, and who was really perturbed only when he was left severely alone. "Means that I'm better dead," grumbled the old man, who, as a last resort to publicity, shammed dead, in order to read his own obituary notices!

I shall always contend that anything which stimulates the imagination in an artistic and healthy manner cannot be sufficiently praised or encouraged. My fête did this, and it should have awakened poetic aspirations in all souls attuned to beauty. Apart from these ideal considerations, such entertainments are good for trade, so no one should be blamed unjustly who spends money on such a praiseworthy object.

It is perhaps needless to mention that my wealth made me the victim of many slanderous attacks. One of the most notable of these attacks led to my first duel.

My eldest son was, like most French babies, entrusted to the care of a supposedly excellent wet-nurse. But our choice was a mistaken one, as the woman was the last person to have been employed in such a responsible capacity. One day a gardener, who was working in the gardens of our house, discovered evidence of a Cimitière des Innocents, on which our wet-nurse had, apparently, a personal option.

It was impossible to keep the woman in our service, but as she possessed a complaisant husband, he forgave her misdemeanour and retired to Brittany with his worse half.

Unfortunately, the discovery of the unusual burying-ground could not be kept from the police, and the *Lanterne*, the socialist organ, at once proceeded to make sensational copy at my expense. The then editor, M. Millerand, who had not yet become a Minister, wielded a ready pen, which was always at the service of certain people. He was later the first to join

a bourgeois Government, when he accepted office in Waldeck-Rousseau's cabinet. This action alarmed the Conservatives, who to-day place Millerand on a level with the Almighty! But "Time changes men's minds, as well as it changes places."

Turot, who contributed to the *Lanterne*, and also to the *Petite République*, was an intelligent, unwieldy person, with little pig's eyes set in a wide expanse of pasty-hued face. He took it on himself to attack me in both papers, and added insult to injury by attributing the paternity of our nurse's indiscretions to me!

It was necessary to silence these slanders, even though my opponent was not worthy of my steel. I therefore asked the Comte de Dion (the promoter of the automobile) and the Comte d'Elva, one of the deputies, to make themselves known to Turot as my seconds. Turot, who to do him justice, was not lacking in courage, referred them to his seconds, M. Gerault Rickard, a Socialist Deputy, and Viviani, who acted as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Great War and who, at the time of which I write, was known as a "rose-water" socialist, who, by virtue of good elocutionary powers and effective methods of phrasing, was already paving the way for an important official position. Viviani is a born orator, and he knows how to present a subject in a marvellous manner, but, always uneducated, he has never troubled to improve his mind, and he embodies in himself the quaint old saying, "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

I experienced no untoward emotions in connexion with my first duel, and it must always be taken into consideration that the idea of fighting a duel is nothing extraordinary to a Frenchman. With us affairs of honour are a necessary complement to social life, and we regard them as infinitely more satisfactory than the protracted libel cases with which honour professes itself to be satisfied in England. Neither do we approve

of the English fashion of washing our dirty linen in public, and of dragging irrelevant people and names into disputes which, with us, are often settled for good and all in less than five minutes.

If I were posing as a romanticist, I suppose I should describe my emotions when I contemplated my little sons who might be fatherless, and my young wife. I might even describe how I wept at memories of Rochecotte and Juigné, and how I determined to play the hero, come what might. I felt none of these praiseworthy sentiments, and I do not believe I took any thought for the morrow. However, I remember that the day before the eventful morning, a funeral passed down the Avenue Bosquet, and the hearse was held up by the traffic at our very door. I noticed several apprehensive glances were directed towards the waiting coffin, but omens never disturb me. "What, is the coffin for me?" I asked. "Well, after all, there's nothing like anticipating trouble."

Turot and I faced each other at nine o'clock the next morning on the road to Neuilly, close to the banks of the Seine. I think that my adversary must have dubbed me a conceited young fop when I threw off my coat and waistcoat and faced him, immaculately white in my thin silk shirt and trousers, which I had chosen as being the most effective background for scarlet!

I glanced round, and saw that many of my friends were present, and I especially noticed Arthur Meyer's dismayed face. Our swords were then measured, and I idly thought how sharp they were . . . the distance was defined . . . the command rang out——

"Marchez . . . allez. . . ." The moment had arrived, and I held my arm as straight as possible, so as to prevent Turot's sword from touching me. It was soon over, and in a couple of minutes I had settled my account by wounding him in the

forearm. I tried to catch Arthur Meyer's eye, and when I did so, I put out my tongue! I could *not* be serious, even if honour was satisfied.

I was overwhelmed with compliments. What victor does not represent an idol with feet of clay? But one of the most flattering messages came from no less a personage than the Ex-Empress Eugénie, who sent M. Pietri to convey her congratulations.

As neither I nor any member of my family had any relations with the Bonapartists, I did not know the Ex-Empress, but courtesy required me to thank her personally for her interest in me, and to ask Admiral Charles Duperre to solicit the honour of an audience for my wife.

The Ex-Empress was staying at the Hôtel Continental, and it was not without feelings of sadness that I saw Eugénie, the beautiful and once powerful, in an environment destitute of taste. The windows of the suite of rooms occupied by the Ex-Empress faced the exact spot in the Tuileries once filled by the palace where she had reigned, and of which not a single stone now remains.

It was impossible to deny the deathless attraction of this Empress of many sorrows: her face still retained traces of its beauty, and the indescribably haughty head was set on a white neck firm and round as a marble column. She was a beautiful and a pathetic wreck!

The Ex-Empress received us reclining on a low couch, and she reminded me that my great-grandfather, the Maréchal de Castellane, had ridden beside her carriage when she entered Perpignan. She was also kind enough to express herself interested in our palace, then in course of construction, and asked me many questions as to our future plans.

If I dare so to describe her, I should call the Empress Eugénie an "outsider" who became a Princess, as she always

seemed, even in the days of her greatness, to have learnt her part and never to play it as to the manner born. Her adventure in imperialism left infinitely more traces upon her than it left on Paris, and it is tragic to think that after her eighteen years' reign there as Empress, so few people are faithful to her memory.

Eugénie was a pretty woman who knew nothing whatever of art, but who contrived to make her court a flower garden of femininity: she herself always as the queen-rose. Unlike most women, she encouraged beauty, secure in her own attractions, and even the detestable art of Winterhalter cannot disguise the swaying grace, sloping shoulders and charming faces of the bevy of beauties who surrounded the lovely Spaniard.

I left the Hôtel Continental, touched and impressed by the courage and fascination of the fallen Empress. And I marvelled at the extreme adaptability of ex-sovereigns to environments which would drive most people to desperation.

The explanation of this adaptability is, however, quite simple. Most royalties possess no taste; they can imitate but they cannot construct. For us others the water must suit the fish, and as life and harmony in a room are indispensable, the desire of the eye, and the power of philosophical reasoning, alone make for true beauty.

The old kings possessed taste, originality and a desire for construction. Their descendants live on the reputation of their predecessors, and are too effete to change existing conditions, or to conceive better ones. They live in their stucco palaces, their gardens are dedicated to lobelias, geraniums and white daisies—they are content with rhododendrons where they might have roses—and their eyes desire nothing different!

I saw the Ex-Empress Eugénie once again before she left Paris, when I was riding in the Bois one morning and noticed a lady who was walking slowly in the grateful shade cast

by the trees. It was the Ex-Empress! I bowed to her, and she returned my salute so exquisitely that I wished it had been my lot to have seen her "receive" in the colourful days of the Second Empire.

I think the Ex-Empress loved France, and it was a kindly action on the part of the Republic to allow her to revisit it after her husband's death. I am not in sympathy with her action, or her political influence, but I admire her as a woman who contributed to the decorative side of life. Eugénie was never drab; she knew the value of dress, and she led the fashions instead of condemning them. Alas, a Queen usually resembles the ordinary little bourgeoise in her idea that it doesn't matter what you look like, but only who you *are*.

What a fatal mistake! Eugénie was never guilty of such an error in judgment, and if you seek the best evidence of the beauty which ensnared the amorous heart of Napoleon III, you will find it in the bust of the Empress by Carpeaux.

That bust constitutes her best monument.

CHAPTER X

I HAD always wished to possess a yacht, and at that very moment, by great good fortune, the *Walhalla,* a three-mast sailing (and steam-auxiliary) ship of sixteen hundred tons, happened to be in the market.

The *Walhalla,* true to her name, was something akin to a floating Paradise, and she looked as beautiful as she was. Her subsequent history, after she passed out of my hands, was somewhat romantic. Her next owner, Lord Crawford, went round the world with her; and Mr. Brokan Gould, who bought her from Lord Crawford, was malicious enough to invite me to cruise with him on what had once been my own ship!

During the War, this queen of yachts changed her sex, and instead of remaining a lady of pleasure, she became a man-of-war. In this capacity she was sunk, but how, when and where, I cannot say.

The *Walhalla* was manned by a crew of a hundred, eight of whom were officers under the command of Captain Vidamment. Nothing could be more picturesque than the sight of her snowy sails unfurling on a clear day, when a soft wind ruffled the canvas until the great wings gradually unfolded, and the yacht looked like some gigantic sea-gull skimming over the face of the waters.

My wife enjoyed yachting as much as myself, so in 1897 we went to Norway with those charming friends, the Comte and Comtesse Jacques de Pourtalés, the Marquis and Marquise de Chaponnay, and the Prince and Princess de Poix. I think

this cruise represents the happiest time of my life; we were all young, all full of the joy of life, and we were determined to enjoy ourselves.

In the Hardanger and Stvanger Fjords the *Walhalla* encountered the *Hohenzollern,* as the Emperor William II, like ourselves, chanced to be cruising round Norway. I decided, however, to ignore the imperial yachtsman, but by some vexing coincidence the Emperor followed the same program as ourselves, and on our return to Kiel we again came face to face. Without losing a moment, I asked permission of the naval authorities to leave Kiel, and we went hurriedly down the canal to Hamburg. It was impossible for a patriot like myself to dress my yacht in honour of such a sovereign in a port which had been constructed after the war of 1870 with money taken from France.

Our next cruise took us to the coast of Russia, and we crossed the Baltic to Petrograd, making eighteen knots an hour! By this time my wife had lost much of her interest in yachting, and, *faute de mieux,* had begun to criticize her guests in a rather adverse spirit. I really found it a difficult task to modify her charity.

Our arrival in the Neva caused something of a sensation, but, once in Russia, Madame de Galliffet's mind was obsessed with the desire to recall herself to the Princes whom she had met at the Tuileries thirty years ago! The good lady imagined every well-dressed person to be a Royal or Imperial Highness, and at the risk of falling out of our carriage, she persisted in standing up and bowing to mystified individuals who did not know her from Adam. The others of the party contented themselves with sightseeing, and "doing" the picture galleries, and I do not think that they were troubled in the least by the knowledge that many of the masterpieces in the the Hermitage are attributed to painters who had never set eyes on them.

We dined one evening with the Marquis de Montebello, then French Ambassador, and, desiring to return the many courtesies shown us, I gave a reception on board the *Walhalla.*

The yacht was decorated with heavy garlands of laurels, which entwined the masts, and as the Grand Dukes of that time were ever in quest of amusement, I invited several of them. But, knowing likewise their passion for prolonged libations, I arranged that the festivities should terminate at midnight. Prince Orloff slipped on deck and unfortunately broke his leg, and, what was still more unfortunate, he limped badly for the remainder of his days.

Hospitality after hospitality was showered on us. The Grand Duke Alexis gave a supper in our honour, and we dined at Tsarkoié-Sélo with the Grand Duke, and the Grand Duchess Vladimir. All these Imperal Princes seemed comparable to claws on one gigantic hand grasping vast, savage and weak Russia, but I already sensed the catastrophic ending of the Imperial regime.

We travelled by special train to Moscow, and felt that here throbbed the mysterious Slav soul which is inseparable from Old Russia and her traditions. Moscow is truly a wonderful city, a city of gilded palaces and barbarous colour schemes; but here, much more than in Petrograd, was life!

On our return to the capital, I found a telegram from Arthur Meyer, telling me the tragic news of the suicide of Colonel Henry, who had killed himself on being accused of forgery in the Dreyfus case. This sensational news practically broke up our party. We had already begun to tire of each other's society, for habit and proximity are most fatal foes to friendship, and each one of us had begun to hate his neighbour.

On returning from our cruise, we went to Deauville, where we rented a pretty villa overlooking the sea. There, as in Paris, I endeavoured to insist upon the decorative duties of

life, and our carriages and postilions contributed in no little measure to the success of the season. In those days Deauville was infinitely more exclusive than it is to-day; it was not then afflicted with a casino, and one had to repair to Trouville in order to find that distraction!

Nearly every morning, our carriage stopped at Madame Doucet's antique-shop, when Maurice Bertrand (that well-known wit dear to the hearts of Parisians) invariably made fun of my postilions and their powdered wigs. One day he jumped up on a chair and, imitating the methods of a circus clown, he proceeded to investigate the whitened hair for himself. But the near horse took fright and Bertrand tumbled unexpectedly from his perch into the road, thus contributing to the amusement of the pretty *baigneuses* who, like myself, found Madame Doucet's an agreeable rendezvous.

It is not surprising that I was both censured and laughed at for my love of outward display, and Anna and I were occasionally called the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein, in deprecation of our elegance and spectacular effect which were held to err on the theatrical side. But if we offended the good taste of our acquaintances, we likewise contrived to interest the public, and we became immensely popular with the man of the street. But the world *could not* or *would not* understand that the decorative in every *métier* of life was my absorbing passion. I was therefore once again called frivolous.

One afternoon, as I was coming back alone by car from Lion-sur-Mer, I stopped for a few minutes on the sea-front at Houlgate. It was a warm grey afternoon; a light rain was falling, and the waves rolled sullenly in the likeness of molten lead. . . . The beach was completely deserted, but, suddenly —Diana rose from the sea! I had never seen a woman who so forcibly recalled the perfection of the antique. I jumped

out of my car and walked towards the beach. In a few minutes Diana sought her tent, looking, as she ran over the wet sand, exactly like the statues of the peerless huntress.

Intrigued, I questioned an official as to her identity, and received the surprising reply:

"Why, that lady is the Duchess of Aosta!"

I was naturally somewhat taken aback, as I did not know that the Duchess happened to be in our part of the world, but I could not help congratulating myself on my adventure, and I was also proud that such loveliness belonged to a daughter of France, and a descendant of her Kings.

It was unfortunate that the movement, gaiety and splendour of life made no direct appeal to my wife. She was domestic, a real home-bird, and the dazzling existence which I had planned was antagonistic to the stronger claim of her upbringing, and any good results were nullified by the mistaken interference of some of our so-called friends.

I am not desirous of using these pages as an *apologia* for our matrimonial trials, which assumed terrific proportions in the press, but as I have been more or less publicly vilified, it behoves me to defend myself. I was not blameless, but I have not deserved the measure of condemnation which I have received.

Anna was one of those individuals who find happiness in a mental orgy of suffering. She loved to hear unpleasant things, to meditate on them, and to magnify them exceedingly. She would defend me and my misdoings to others, but she would never defend them to herself. Deep in her soul was the implanted idea that all Frenchmen were *bad!*

Matters were becoming hopeless. Anna never forgave me for having "lived" before I married her: she ignored the fact that the majority of men are "widowers" on their wedding day, since until then most lives are shared by unofficial wives!

Thus, life became impossible. Anna saw a rival in every woman, and as her outlook became needlessly embittered, I showed at last some natural resentment.

I surrounded Anna with the thousand and one attentions which appeal to women: I was inordinately proud of her, and I wanted her to represent the last word in social success. When she allowed herself to be guided by me in the choice of her gowns, she was the best-dressed woman in Paris. But, even in the small matter of choosing her toilettes, she would not admit that my advice counted.

One evening, when she was looking more than usually attractive, a mutual friend complimented my wife on her appearance and her gown. "It is easy to see," said the good-natured woman, "that Boni designed it."

Anna's face clouded: she compressed her lips in the tight line which I already knew—and feared. Then . . . she deliberately ignored our friend.

My wife never went to a *couturière*—the *couturières* came to her, as I had no opinion whatever of the *milieu* in which model creations are usually displayed. Dress is far better chosen in the place where it will be worn. Most of the *salons* represent a Joseph's coat of many colours; and it is impossible to retain one's individuality in the midst of a crowd of manikins and assorted oddments of femininity. It was likewise my pleasure that certain fashion-designers were especially retained to "create" for my wife. Her gowns were never duplicated.

Anna became superelegant, and the hearts of Paquin and Doucet rejoiced greatly. My choice did me infinite credit, and I was overjoyed when Anna passed the ordeal of criticism by my mother and her friends at a soirée given at my mother's house on the Boulevard de la Tour Maubourg.

Anna looked radiant and girlish in a spangled white muslin

gown; her slim waist was encircled with a rose-red sash, and in her dark hair she wore a wreath of diamond leaves made by the famous jeweller Aucoc. Both in looks and manner, she was entirely successful, her piquant American accent making her French irresistible!

I was curious to hear the judgment passed on her, and it was soon forthcoming. As I stood unnoticed in a dark alcove, a certain Princess whose lightest word was regarded as law remarked:

"So . . . we have at last seen the Comtesse de Castellane. Well, gossip is wrong this time. She looks very nice!"

By the same token, I realized that any speculation connected with us erred on the side of ill nature! This decided me, and with a heart overflowing with tenderness for the girl who "looked nice," I determined to make our home an unassailable fortress against the onslaughts of the world. But I was powerless, as (God alone knows why) an undercurrent of envy, hatred and malice embittered the twelve years of my married life, and only showed its hydra-head on the day when the news of our divorce provided Paris with a fresh sensation.

It was then that the famous caricature appeared which parodied the popular painting *"Enfin Seuls,"* in which my portrait *alone* appeared and below it was the expressive title, this time in the singular:

"Enfin Seul!"

We could not live like ordinary people. At the sight of us, the passers-by gaped and nudged each other. One almost heard them saying: "Look! Whoever are they?" We received dozens of anonymous letters, some threatening, others pleading, others "begging" letters pure and simple. A young girl wanted a dowry, an author craved for a new bicycle—the requests were legion and, wearied by the trivialities which be-

set our path, I turned my attention to the selection of a suitable country estate.

Anna frankly detested Rochecotte, and never ceased quoting the Duc de Noailles whenever anyone happened to admire the view from the terrace. "Why," she would remark, in tones of supreme contempt, "the Loire looks like a tired woman who only gets strength when leaving her bed."

But although Anna was not in sympathy with the Loire, she enjoyed riding over the flat country-side of Touraine, which by some fanciful conceit I likened to green velvet studded with strange jewels whenever I glimpsed the quiet little lakes, their waters reflecting the blues, greys, amber, rose and greens of the changing skies.

It was during these cross-country rides that the idea of drag-hunts first suggested itself to me, and I soon instituted a "drag" somewhat similar to that at Pau. Colonel de Lastours, then in command of the cavalry school at Saumur, allowed his officers to take part in our drag-hunts, and their presence contributed largely to the merriment of the hour. Unfortunately, my father was rather thoughtless where his pleasure was in question, and one day the whim seized him to take the drag over some private ground belonging to Comte Henri de Maillé. The Comte was not in favour of a drag, and his anger can be easily imagined when he suddenly saw thirty horsemen following the excited hounds over his lawns and jumping the ha-ha's which separated the park from the fields. "Good morning, good morning!" called my father, who, however, soon noticed that his neighbour did not return his greeting. And small wonder! The Comte's anger was primarily responsible for his loss of speech, and, secondly, his rage brought on a fit of apoplexy! He collapsed on his desecrated land, was taken home, and died shortly afterwards!

My drag-hunts have now become popular legends of the

country-side, and it was only after my election as Deputy that I gave up this amusing form of recreation.

The month of May, 1897, will always be associated with the appalling catastrophe of the fire at the Bazar de la Charité. People marvelled that the fatality had not occurred before, as the building in which it was held was constructed of wood. The victims were many, and amongst them was the beautiful Duchesse d'Alençon, one of the four fair sisters whose names are so associated with tragedy.

The disaster originated through a carelessly dropped match, and the bazaar was instantly in flames. The work of rescue was badly organized, and on the morrow, in a burst of genuine generosity and sympathy, my wife offered to give a million francs for the erection of a fire-proof building. Her project was acclaimed by Parisian society, and shortly afterwards we built the Galerie de la Charité in the Rue Pierre Charron, and the front of the building bore an inscription to the effect that it was erected in memory of Madame de Castellane's mother—otherwise, "Founded by the Miller-Gould Family."

The Galerie de la Charité was finished in 1900, but nobody came forward with the funds necessary to maintain it, and as we had already spent half a million more than we anticipated, we were not disposed to provide any more. However, the Comte Albert de Brunel occupied himself with the financial side and, thanks to his efforts, the new bazaar was soon placed on a satisfactory footing . . . so much so, that the government rightly awarded the Legion of Honour to this indefatigable worker!

On the day of the inauguration of the new bazaar, I caused a throne to be placed at one end of the large hall, and there Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, blessed the good work. The Archbishop was surrounded by a group of the most notable literary men in France—Jules Lemâitre, François Coppée, Thiébaud, Syveton, all of whom paid wonderful newspaper

tributes to the generosity of Madame de Castellane, and Comte Albert de Mun delivered a very touching personal address.

I ordered footmen in vivid scarlet liveries to dispose themselves against the white columns, between which hung garlands of mauve clematis, a decorative scheme suggested to me by the biblical account of the fêtes given in honour of Esther.

Everyone was lost in admiration, but Paris has a short memory. Few people trouble themselves to recall the events of twenty years, and it is curious to realize that to-day nothing remains of my endless schemes for beautifying life but—ruins.

In 1914 Madame de Castellane, then remarried into our family as Duchesse de Talleyrand, gave notice to the authorities that she had decided to use the building for other purposes, and, as she had never given the Galerie to France, there was nothing for it but to submit to the inevitable.

I am convinced that Anna was primarily actuated by the impelling desire to make a clean cut out of anything connected with me. Perhaps the Duc de Talleyrand, a deeply religious man, believed in the truth of the words, "He who giveth to the poor, lendeth unto the Lord," and so conceived it his duty to take the Galerie from the poor and lend it to God, by selling it two years ago, as a speculative venture, to a group of business men!

I often wonder whether the many disasters which have overtaken me are the result of my character, or whether they arise from a disproportionate imagination; but if I have erred, at any rate *I have paid.* Is it not extraordinary that my cherished collections have been dispersed to the four winds of heaven, that everything I had has been taken away, and that all my efforts have proved useless? Even my philanthropic plans have not survived my ruin! But perhaps the Fates who presided at the birth of one born absolutely out of his period,

knew the wisdom of the aphorism, "A little luck is often worth a ton of wisdom."

The following spring saw Anna and myself cruising in the Mediterranean, taking Corsica and Malta in our itinerary, and at Valetta I was surprised and touched to find that many of my family, who were members of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, had been buried in the cathedral. The governor of Malta at that time was Lord Strickland, one of the Standishes, who lunched with us on board the *Walhalla* and afterwards invited us to an evening party at Government House, where I was intrigued to find an assembly of guests in all shades of complexion, ranging from black to white, and from yellow to brown!

At Civita Vecchia we entrained for Rome, where we were the guests of Madame le Ghait, and I renewed many of the friendships of six years ago. Leo XIII graciously accorded us another audience when he blessed our home and ourselves. But unfortunately the good wishes of a Pope are not, like himself, infallible!

The great pontiff (an earthly saint, if ever there was one) did not lack a pretty wit. When he was Nuncio at Brussels, the Prince de X, who supposedly wished to confuse a cleric, showed him a beautiful snuff-box on the lid of which was a miniature representing a lady reclining on a blue couch in the costume of Eve before the Fall.

"Will you give me your candid opinion, Monsignor, as to the artistic merits of this miniature?" asked the Prince.

Monsignor Pecci (as he was then) surveyed his questioner, and replied with the utmost gravity: "First tell me, my dear Prince, whether the portrait is that of the Princess."

Whilst we were at Rome, His Royal Highness the Comte de Turin expressed a wish to see the *Walhalla*, and I therefore chartered a special train to convey us to the port. The Comte

was accompanied by Madame le Ghait, Comte and Comtesse Potocki, Comte Primoli, Comte Brazza, Princess Fürstenberg and a few other friends.

After luncheon on board, I proposed a short sea-trip, but the anticipation proved better than the reality, as a sudden storm made us hurriedly seek shelter. So instead of returning thanks for our hospitality, our guests most unthankfully returned us their lunches!

We soon left Rome for Cannea, where I settled down with my two little sons in the Villa Luynes, which I had rented that year. The *Walhalla* remained at anchor. I had sent down horses and carriages from Paris, and we kept open house, Everyone of note on the Riviera came to see us, but my feelings did not correspond with my appearance, and notwithstanding luxury and success, my wife and I did not get on well together.

Absence often constitutes the best remedy for bickerings, so I went off on an electoral campaign at Castellane. But when I returned, I found a very sullen better half. Perhaps I was to blame for her attitude, as, young, selfish and light-hearted, I easily succumbed to temptation, and I let everything go to the winds when my inclination was aroused. I remember how once at a reception given by Baron Alphonse de Rothschild to meet the Prince of Wales, I forgot everybody, lost in sudden admiration of a charming woman. Flowers, music, beauty, guests—nothing troubled me except the desire of the moment.

At this same garden party, I heard an amusing remark made by one of my friends, a prim fellow with a cynical turn of speech, who was constantly deceived by his adored wife. This lady, however, was in her turn deceived by the lover of the hour, and vented her bad temper on her unfortunate husband. Some irresponsible individual who was cognizant of the tragic

story asked L. for news of Madame. . . . "Ah . . . she is a little better to-day," said L. gravely. "You see, I am consoling her."

I burst out laughing, and my wife asked me what had amused me so inordinately. I told her, but I added, very unwisely: "Now that's what I call a sensible man." Anna instantly favoured me with an icy stare and turned her back on me, leaving me angry and humiliated before those of Baron Alphonse's guests who had been amused "listeners-in."

CHAPTER XI

The State visit of the Tsar and Tsaritsa of Russia aroused the greatest enthusiasm in Paris, but who would have imagined that only a few years later the news of their murders would be received with such apathy? Truly Parisians have chameleon-like memories!

As our new house was not yet habitable, I erected a laurel-wreathed platform on one side of the Avenue du Bois, from where we could watch the procession, and my guests were greatly moved at the sight of the Ally who represented the foreign support to France so sadly lacking since 1870.

The visit of the Russian sovereigns occurred during a genial and beautiful autumn, and the effect of the charming verdure, the crystalline sky and the groups of Arabs in their scarlet and white burnous, contributed largely to the picturesqueness of the scene.

Nevertheless, the arrangements of the route did not please me; it would have been far more decorative to have used the main artery of Paris for this purpose. The sovereigns should have left the train at a specially constructed station at the Rond Point de la Défense, to be saluted by a large military guard, and welcomed with the acclamations of the crowd and the music of the massed bands. They would then have driven between two lines of trophies direct to the Louvre, passing underneath the Arc de Triomphe, the inscriptions on which would have served to remind our guests that we received them on terms of equality.

I suggested this scheme to a highly placed official, but he laughed at my project. The imperial couple left the train at Auteuil, and were taken across the Bois de Boulogne like a couple of woodlanders by devious ways to the Russian Embassy.

How typical of the Republic! What a sign of the times—a leaning towards the crooked, and a distaste for the straight line of duty! It was impossible for me to attempt to understand this middle-class city. I preferred to exist in a dream world of past splendour, pretty women and interesting people. An exile from my period, but not from my country, I found consolation in this fanciful environment, driven thither from sheer disgust at the *milieu* in which I found myself.

My palace in the Avenue du Bois will, however, remain for all time as a monument of beauty and thereby immortalize the name of Samson, its wonderful architect. But before throwing open my doors to the great world, I decided to implore the blessing of Heaven on the house and on all who dwelt therein, so, in a religious spirit, I asked the Curé de Saint-Honoré d'Elau, the famous Abbé Marbeau, later Bishop of Meaux, remarkable for his heroism in 1914, to perform the ceremony of benediction.

I celebrated the occasion by paying all rents under 500 francs of residents in our parish, and how well I remember that day! When the good priest, preceded by a crucifer and followed by a procession of clergy and children, arrived at the new building, Madame de Castellane was presented with a silver trowel in order to place certain coins, and a medal specially struck with my portrait and hers, beneath the cornerstone. I imagined this offering to be propitious. I did not anticipate that this "consecrated" site would never represent an abiding home for me. But "when you have painted your

house in rose-colour," says the Chinese proverb, "Fate covers it with black."

Our first reception was not in honour of Capital, but of Labour, as my guests were persons who had taken part in constructing our house. Artists, decorators, metal-workers, sculptors, plumbers and connoisseurs in sewage, to the number of some three hundred, defiled up the magnificent staircase in their Sunday best, to be welcomed by me, my family and some of our intimate friends. Supper was served at a table measuring twenty-eight yards long, and my guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

At that time the importance of Labour was not recognized as it is to-day. The value of the workman was not rightly estimated, with the result that, in many cases, those employed by the rich were worked like machines, and not as men deserving of consideration as intelligent individuals! I have always found that rightful recognition brings about a sympathetic and artistic *entente* between the employer and the employed, and in my own case I have always received extraordinary devotion from all those who have worked for me.

My palace was really superb! And as I place artistic objects in two distinct classes, I decided to evolve a double staircase leading to an immense *salon des arts* on one side, the walls of which were decorated with bas-reliefs of painting, sculpture, architecture and music under a painted ceiling representing the Triumph of the Arts. On the other side of the staircase I built a theatre to seat six hundred, where I hoped to give new plays and modern opera. Alas, my theatre is still unfinished!

We entertained on a sumptuous scale . . . and our fêtes were enhanced by the beauty of our interior. Imagine a *mise-en-scène* of rare marbles, beautiful workmanship and walls

whereon are depicted animals symbolic of the five continents, elephants, camels and horses, surmounted by the triumphal arms of France.

Our guests were, unfortunately, not always in keeping with the exquisite setting. This was due to social conditions, as a real court reception in a private house has no *raison d'être.* My guests, therefore, gave the impression of an ordinary picture in too rich a frame. As for myself, who by origin belonged to hierarchic times, I resembled in our modern democracy nothing but a derelict. And, unfortunately, the dissimilarity of taste between my wife and myself did not make for happiness. Some subtle essence of misunderstanding permeated our home, and occasionally made itself felt by those who accepted our hospitality, while my wife was in constant rebellion against the etiquette which I deemed essential. One day, heartily sick of everybody and everything, she remarked pettishly: "Oh, dear, what a stupid Princess! You force me to curtsy to her, but she isn't in the same street as an American like myself. I'm infinitely superior to her." This absence of proper consideration for rank was not displayed to annoy me, and her lack of snobbishness came less from the indifference which she felt towards rank in general than from her infernal pride, which made her believe she was superior to everybody, and that the universe was at her disposal.

On the days of our receptions, I received at the head of the grand staircase, the better to observe the expressions of those who were our guests. But the marble steps were so highly polished that it became a question of safety first and criticism afterwards on the part of the visitors, and I remember Princesse d'Ysenbourg's wail of fright when she missed her footing and fell, fortunately with little injury—save to her feelings!

We were envied, criticized and condemned for the decora-

THE GRAND STAIRWAY

tive beauty of our life. Prince X could not for the life of him help saying: "Why on earth do you dress up your servants in these powdered wigs and costumes?"

I turned to him coldly. "Well, *mon cher*," I replied, "if I did not attempt the unusual, you would have nothing to say, and since I give myself the pleasure of receiving you as my guest, the least I can do is to give you the pleasure of criticizing me."

Another well-known visitor walked about tapping the walls, hoping to find which part of them was real marble, and which part imitation. He was stupefied when he discovered a marble panel, which I had especially *painted over* to harmonize with the general scheme, and after having scratched it with his finger-nail he remarked: "What on earth possessed you to *paint marble?*"

"Because the marble happens to be too crude for my taste," I told him. "In this way I hide reality, as you mask your real feelings in words."

He could not believe his ears!

Jealousy always amuses me, but then I have never experienced this devastating emotion. At this period I attributed it, in many cases, to the impossibility of my guests' accommodating themselves to the magnitude of my ideas.

Hence they occasionally lost their heads, and indulged in unheard-of vulgarities. On one occasion an unspeakable cad stuck a pin into the leg of a footman, in order to ascertain whether his calves were padded! The unfortunate man uttered a stifled shriek, but refrained from turning on his tormentor, and, although I condemned the action, I could hardly refrain from smiling!

Occasionally, when we entertained two thousand guests at our Soirées, a line of carriages extended from the Avenue to the Arc de Triomphe, and sometimes five hundred footmen,

who had come to attend to their masters, filled the halls. I seemed to be surrounded by a revolving aureole of powdered wigs and scarlet liveries, on which were embroidered the arms of my house. As I stood on a staircase copied from the famous Ambassadors' Staircase at Versailles, I listened to the strains of an orchestra under Dambé which played a varied program ranging from "God Save Henri IV" to "The Ride of the Valkyries." And as the hum of voices rose above the music, pride was born anew within my heart.

Multimillionaires often sought my advice as a collector—amongst others, Pierpont Morgan, a sort of nabob, who was infinitely more of a real art-lover than any of his compatriots, and who possessed a soul above dollars! He, nevertheless, grasped with the avidity of a furniture-remover the beautiful things which were suggested to him. This strange individual may be described as being more of a Catholic than a Protestant, and his private life was certainly not regulated by the tenets of any especially severe creed. Whenever I met him at an antiquary's, he tried to avoid me, for, although he appreciated my taste, he probably guessed what I would say of his. One day, when I discovered him bargaining for a bas-relief of Mino da Fiesole, I praised that marvel greatly. This, however, brought no luck to the merchant, for moved by some petty feeling, frequently met with in wealthy men, Morgan, as if desirous of showing his independence, refused to purchase it. God alone knows why!

I sometimes thought that he was more of a passionate collector than a true artist. One day I saw him buy at random twelve caskets containing jewels of the Renaissance without looking at them. However, these American collectors always remind me of the words of La Bruyère—"How little value Providence must attach to riches, when one sees on whom they

are bestowed!" But fortunately all Americans are not impossible as lovers of art. Daniel Guggenheim was one of the noblest men I have ever met. I cannot pay a higher tribute to his memory. Otto Kahn was another delightful New Yorker, and Joseph Féder, a veritable artist in bibelots, and George Blumenthal are others whom I remember as superior to the generality of connoisseurs.

Amongst Europeans, less blessed with this world's wealth, who have distinguished themselves by reasons of their unerring taste, I may mention Doctor Carvalho, who, assisted by a colourful imagination, has created some of the most beautiful gardens in the world, having the mind of a monk of the fifteenth century. In order to appreciate the genius of this great man, one must see him at Villandry, and listen to him explaining the work of restoration there. He stands alone in his appreciation of historic tradition, and he is never guilty of an inartistic error.

Not long after we had taken possession of our new home, I gave a family dinner to celebrate the forthcoming marriage of my brother Stanislas to Miss Terry. The Comtesse de Beaulaincourt, then well over eighty, who was at my right, bitter-sweet and witty, greatly appreciated the effect produced by a large bay at the end of the dining-room, which showed an emerald piscina separated from us only by a banister in wrought iron. When my servants in their scarlet liveries stood against it, my old aunt pretended that she thought she was in an aquarium filled with red mullet! She possessed a great sense of humour and, noticing a certain friend who was unspeakably angular, she remarked: "Who *is* that man? He is so scraggy that one sees him always in profile!"

In those days, as now, I was vastly interested in heraldry, and I had the genealogies of most of the great French families

at my finger-tips. I had also traced the origin of our own from the dawn of history, but it had taken an interminable time, as I would accept the authenticity of genuine documents only.

According to the archives and M. Guérineau, the Castellanes, as sovereign Princes, were direct descendants of the Kings of Arles, who in their turn sprang from the Carlovingians.

My easily understood family pride was now satisfied, and I sent copies of the "Tree" to various relations, among others, the Comtesse de Beaulaincourt.

After having perused the roll-call of our ancestors, she sent for M. Guérineau.

"I see only one error in your wonderful compilation," she said. "You have forgotten to enumerate amongst our forbears a certain Adam de Castellane, who married Eve—I don't know who. Do try and find out from whence she sprang, and what was her maiden-name!"

A tragicomic experience befell us on the occasion of the visit of the King of Spain to Paris, when His Majesty did us the honour to invite us to welcome him at the Spanish Embassy. As this invitation afforded scope for spectacular display, I drove to the Embassy in a splendid Dorsay. My horses were magnificent, and my coachman and grooms wore their State liveries. The police, who were apprehensive of an attempt on the King's life—and reasonably so, because that same evening His Majesty had narrowly escaped being murdered—were guarding the principal thoroughfares with a living hedge of soldiers, to prevent the crowd from pressing forward, but at the sight of my brilliant "turn-out," I was taken for the King, and acclaimed by the enthusiastic populace as I drove down the Avenue du Bois and the Avenue Hoche. I was highly amused, but I never realized the danger I had incurred until I had returned home.

That same evening, I was invited as one of the Deputies to

a State reception at the Elysée. I had never been inside the palace, and I was obliged to explain my reasons for so doing in an article in the *Figaro*, apropos of the royal visit. I said that it depended on the opposition not to allow the world to imagine that the King's visit was to the Government alone, but to prove that His Majesty's intention was to cement the entire French nation in friendship. We, as Frenchmen of the Old Regime, had no excuse for not showing respect to a Catholic King simply because he was the guest of those with whose political views we were not in sympathy.

I had hoped to meet a number of distinguished people on this occasion. I was woefully disappointed. Instead, I found myself hemmed in by a herd of unknown common-looking individuals, who impeded the passage of the King. We might have been at the entrance of the underground tube.

The reception rooms at the Elysée are horrible! In the immense Galerie des Fêtes, built some years ago by I know not whom, the marvellous tapestries displaying the arms of the Bourbons are ruined by their vulgar frames of clumsy plaster of a ridiculous thickness. There is not a more hideous place in the world, and the students responsible for the Bal des Quatre Arts would have decorated the Galerie with more taste and originality.

The guests, dressed in hired evening clothes, wandered aimlessly through the vast rooms. One wondered whence they came, as I had never encountered their like before even in the street. The womenkind were most inelegant, and only the gowns worn by diplomatic femininity made one realize that everyone present was *not* of the same set.

Dust lay over everything, and the wilting palms and tired ferns recalled the aspect of a railway station, decorated in honour of a travelling official. Terrible "luminous" owls of porcelain, wired for electric light, illuminated the common red

carpet and the ugly livery of the menservants: the ushers sported moustaches, and their suits were positively threadbare!

The music provided was detestable, and the refreshments uneatable. Dust-powdered cakes and boardlike sandwiches were arrayed on a buffet ornamented with muslin bows and red roses. And, to my horror, I noticed that the cold *consommé* was served out of disused mineral-water bottles.

The King of Spain walked about in this awful nightmare, and from time to time he smiled covertly as if to imply that he thought but little of the artistic capabilities of the French Republic.

The whole adventure amazed me. I had been to many country fêtes which were charming, and at which the peasants showed a tasteful *naïveté*. Here, there was an immeasurable distance between the governing class and those whom they governed. What is the reason that the head of France is always so hideous in comparison with its beautiful body?

In 1897, Mme. de Castellane was seized with the fancy to acquire the estate and château of Marais which were then in the market. This entrancing château was built in 1770 by a *fermier général* named Le Maître, but it was never inhabited during the Revolution. Marais is a perfect example of "logical" construction, and one enters it from the middle of the great outer court, and not from the side. The *salon d'honneur* which occupies the centre of the building is approached by severely plain rooms in the nature of a passage, which in turn lead to others that are more decorative. When we had come into possession, I transported to Marais several of the family portraits, from Rochecotte, which gave life and an inhabited look to the château.

My first aim in settling down at Marais was to become on good terms with the dwellers in the country-side, and Anna

and I returned the visits of our charming neighbours like a newly married couple. Besides our own friends in the châteaux, we called on the mayor, the notary, and on all the leading people.

As we could not go to all the houses, it occurred to me to give a fête to the peasants of the neighbouring localities. I have always had a preference for peasants and workmen. Those whom I like least are society people, because amongst them one finds more jealousy and far less gratitude.

I therefore opened the park to these good neighbours, prepared illuminations, put up a tent on a meadow, and caused merry-go-rounds to be brought for the children. I organized all kinds of attractions, and finally I offered to open the ball with the oldest woman of the country. Contrary to the custom of Touraine, this ancient *danseuse* did not wear a cap, and her few remaining hairs were neatly parted in the centre and twisted into a knot behind.

Just as I was about to address my guests, the sound of an automobile disturbed me. I had given strict orders that no vehicles were to be allowed inside the park during the fête, but to my stupefaction I recognized by uninvited visitor as the Comte de Perigord, afterwards Prince de Sagan, with whom I was hardly on speaking terms, and who had not met my wife. The Comte explained his visit by saying that, as he happened to be in the vicinity, he felt it his bounden duty to pay a ceremonious call at the château.

My cousin listened to my address, applauded my sentiments, drank a cup of tea, and departed. Little did I dream, when I entertained this angel unawares, that he would eventually own Marais and—incidentally—marry my wife.

Did the Comte come to spy out the land, or was his visit purely in the nature of chance? I have never been able to satisfy myself.

A succession of receptions and highly placed visitors enlivened our sojourn at Marais, and we gave a notable *soirée musicale* in honour of the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess Wladimir. Dambémy, entrepreneur-in-chief, presided over the orchestra, and the Comtesse de Guerne sang like an angel who had strayed from the choir invisible. Mrs. Arthur Paget, another of our guests, will remain always outstanding in my memory as one of the most attractive women of the Edwardian Era.

I gave another delightful fête when I asked the Duc de Lorges and Comte Louis d'Harcourt to meet H.R.H. the Duc de Montpensier. After the day's shooting, the park and the great canal were illuminated, and fireworks in the similitude of fleurs-de-lis blossomed in the darkness. It was a charming ensemble, but Marais stimulated my imagination, and I planned to install a collection of exotic animals there. Already I visualized glowing flower-beds gilded by the setting sun, amongst which wandered gigantic Nubians wearing plumed red turbans, holding jaguars or sinuous black panthers in leash—the whole scene silhouetted against a changing background of evening sky.

Marais lent itself admirably to my decorative schemes. It was absolutely in keeping with its period, and to live there was like living in another world. Its pale reseda interior harmonized with the fancy liveries worn by my servants, liveries which departed from my pet theory that all liveries should conform to the colours of the coat of arms belonging to the house. But scarlet would have desecrated Marais, so I evolved white coats embellished with Brandebourgs and pale blue breeches. These, worn in conjunction with powdered hair, made the old faded house gain in distinction, and it was easy to imagine oneself back in the blue and silver

days of the eighteenth century, when life was decorative and Courtesy and Refinement walked hand in hand.

Our most noteworthy reception was given in honour of the late King Carlos of Portugal, who had stayed in Rambouillet as the guest of the Republic the evening before coming to Marais.

King Carlos left the Gare d'Orsay by special train, and my carriage and four awaited His Majesty at Saint-Chéron, where he arrived about ten o'clock in the morning.

It was superb weather, and I was greatly honoured by the King's visit. He had a pretty talent for painting, he was a crack shot, and, like the late King Edward VII, he embodied the charming attributes of a gentleman with the tact and finesse of an accomplished citizen of the world.

The King had a very enjoyable shoot, and a reception at five o'clock followed, after which I had arranged a representation of Robert de Flers' "Chonchette" both as an agreeable entertainment for His Majesty and also in the nature of an antidote against the usual tedious before-dinner bridge. A display of fireworks in the park terminated the program of the day.

Upon returning from the shoot, the members of the house-party went to their rooms to reappear half an hour later in tea-gowns and smoking-jackets. I had begged my fair friends to humour me by wearing tea-gowns which would not clash with the delicate tones of my *salons;* the servants, of course, were already quite in the picture. The ensemble was perfect, and at a quarter past five, with everyone present, I waited all anticipation to see the effect which my colour scheme would produce on this monarch. But, alas! King Carlos cared nothing for my resedas, blues, and creams, and he appeared wearing a bright-red smoking jacket. The King was, as all the

world knows, corpulent, and he completely destroyed the harmony I had contemplated. Flowers, gowns, liveries—all were ruined!

And yet a touch of scarlet, judiciously employed, is most effective, and I remember an amusing experience which occurred during the visit of a Russian Imperial Highness to Marais. In order to produce a striking effect at the entrance of the *cour d'honneur*, I told a servant to stand there wrapped in a red cloak, and the Grand Duke who noticed this study in scarlet, somewhat like a bloodstain on the grey walls of the château, was frankly astonished.

"Why, what Cardinal is that?" he asked. And after I had enlightened him, the Prince favoured me with a pitying glance —not unmixed with admiration. He imagined me doubtless a little mad!

Upon our return to Paris, King Carlos twice invited us to accompany him to the play, as he wished to applaud the Divine Sarah as Marguerite Gautier, and to congratulate Réjane on her superb acting in "The Doll's House."

Sarah Bernhardt was always an actress; one had only to know her in private life in order to realize this. She posed from morning to night, and I remember seeing her seated on a raised dais, like some goddess-queen of antiquity, surrounded by an admiring crowd, who listened to the pearls of wisdom and amiability which fell from her lips.

She lunched with us one day: an unforgettable memory of an auburn-haired woman in white muslin crowned with flowering laurel, exactly like the portrait by Bastien-Lepage, now in the possession of Mme. Willy Blumenthal. Sarah Bernhardt possessed the strange exotic beauty of an orchid allied to the sinuous grace of a jaguar. She was also the ideal wearer of Lalique's lovely jewels, things beautiful in themselves, but conceived somewhat, I think, in the spirit of a false Renaissance.

Réjane, the witty and exquisite, was a direct contrast to Sarah. Her genius was, in its way, as rare, her face as striking, but she did not share the great tragedienne's morbid and eccentric tastes. Réjane was, frankly, a comedian, and as Madame Sans-Gêne she was incomparable.

In one of the club revues, Réjane took the part of the Prince de Sagan, and, like him, she wore a white wig, a hat tilted on one side, a monocle suspended by a black ribbon, a white waistcoat, and a carnation as a buttonhole! I took my uncle to see Réjane in her dressing-room, between the acts, but when Sagan came face to face with Sagan, the real Prince was not too well pleased. However, Réjane was equal to the occasion. She laughed in my uncle's face, and began to sing the famous air from "Robert le Diable."

"What! . . . It is I! . . . No, it is you! . . . But . . . *you are me.* Hang it all! What an awkward meeting!"

The Prince entered at last into the spirit of the jest, and considered his double as in a looking-glass. Peace was thus happily restored.

When we were first married, my wife spoke French with difficulty, but she had a sweet way of replying to those who paid her compliments by saying: *"C'est aimable à dire."*

When speaking to the Queen of Spain in the third person, she once made a mistake and addressed her as "Your Royal Highness" instead of "Your Majesty." However, she very soon grew accustomed to courts and her behavior surprised everyone, as she received the highest personalities without showing the least embarrassment. The shy little American girl of former days was transformed.

When she received King Carlos, she awaited him on the landing of the grand staircase, while I went down to meet him at the entrance door, and her graceful curtsy was much admired.

She very soon mastered the subtleties of our tongue and,

notwithstanding a strong accent, she was able to make malicious remarks. If she felt marked antipathies for certain people, she had likewise transports of sensibility for others. This sensibility led her, on her own initiative, to send flowers to Déroulède while he was in prison.

But her friends were not always judicious, notably in the case of a certain Mrs. Black, whose accent, together with her whole personality, suggested the very *Farthest West*. Mme. de Castellane was fond of her, and made her the confidante of her numerous grievances. Mrs. Black disliked me, and I in turn detested her. I was even petty-minded enough to attack her verbally at one of our shoots.

This took place on a fine September morning. Mrs. Black appeared at lunch with the guns, wearing a white gown, and a hat which represented the sacrifice of innumerable pheasants' tails on the altar of Fashion.

"My dear lady," I said, when I had recovered from the shock caused by her attire, "I feel it my bounden duty to tell you that your gown and hat are entirely out of place at a shoot. Of course I am willing to allow you that you are ignorant of country-house customs, but it is never too late to learn." Mrs. Black favoured me with a Medusa-like glance, and (perhaps rightly) never forgave my rather brutal criticism!

CHAPTER XII

The name of Baron Alphonse de Rothschild will remain for ever inseparable from the best traditions of patriotism, and his advice was greatly in request by the various governments who rightly estimated its value. Thus, willing to help others, a patriot worthy of the name, and blest with infinite charity, the Baron combined unusual talents with a most pleasing personality.

I can see him to-day: a man of middle height, wearing clothes a size too large for him, an unvarying carnation in his buttonhole, taking his constitutional in the Bois de Boulogne, his hands loosely clasped behind him, his eyes earth-bound. The Baron always conveyed the impression of being ill at ease during his solitary walks, and he seemed grateful whenever one disturbed his meditations.

Baron Alphonse loved to surround his friends with every imaginable luxury (as I well know), and his magnificent mansion in the Rue St. Florentin, once the home of Talleyrand—where my grandmother, the Marquise de Castellane, had been brought up by her uncle—was a veritable museum of treasures. It was admirably presided over by the Baroness, a charming woman, who possessed, however, few traces of her former beauty.

It is impossible to underestimate the part which Baron Alphonse played after the war of 1870. He was one of the great financiers who charged themselves with the burden of the Reparations, and although he made no secret of having prof-

ited thereby, he was mainly actuated by patriotism and a desire to accomplish a task of national importance.

Nevertheless, he was unable to prevent the issue of free coinage in 1873, but he was fully aware of the folly of the measure, and he manifested the greatest hostility to the idea long before it became law. The majority of financiers to-day, however, act in unison with the Government, and thus upset every tradition without accomplishing any good purpose save that of plunging the nation into a condition bordering on anarchy.

I put myself up for election at Castellane in 1898, and I was nominated on a frankly reactionary program. My opponent was a clever and honest man, M. François Deloncle, who had only one fault—that of daring to oppose me. And in those days such opposition was in the nature of a crime!

After my election, the inhabitants of Castellane presented me with the keys of the citadel, and the portrait of my great-grandfather given by him to the municipality when he was created a Maréchal of France. So I made a triumphal entry into my native town, which has been associated with the name of Castellane for over a thousand years, and where a fountain is inscribed with the names of Boniface I de Castellane, in 866, of Boniface VI, in the eleventh century, and, last but not least, that of the romantic troubadour Antoine de Castellane who flourished during the thirteenth century.

One of our councillors, the excellent M. Colomb, stated openly that he had voted for me because a member of my family had thrown open the doors of England to his grandfather.

I looked at him in surprise. "What in the world do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, M. le Comte," replied the good soul, "my grandfather was *chef* to the Prince de Talleyrand, and he made his

debut in London as a scullion in 1832. Isn't that the best of reasons for giving you the vote?"

These worthy provincials were occasionally extremely amusing, and I remember that once at a banquet the little daughter of a municipal light nearly choked herself with a piece of too hastily swallowed cake.

"I'm choking! . . . I'm choking, papa!" cried the child, raising her voice above the after-dinner speech then in progress, and her father, who was apparently quite used to relieving the unsuccessful cake-eater, made no trouble of her condition but, thrusting his finger down his daughter's throat, promptly retrieved the impediment. Nothing else mattered for a moment!

My first act as a Deputy was to abolish the feudal right which gave certain millers the privilege of grinding the corn of the province, and which had not yet been abolished since the Revolution. In fact, the promise to do this was an understood thing between the electors and myself when I first put myself up as a candidate. I had already received certain delegates in Paris, who, wonder of wonders, had never seen a town larger than Castellane. I naturally endeavoured to make their visit pleasant, but the beauties of my *Folies Bergères* embarrased their modesty, and the traffic terrified them. They were all heartily glad to return home.

The life of a Deputy was by no means a bed of roses, and the Dreyfus Affair was the beginning of the disagreeable conditions of which I was one of the victims. The mysterious disintegration of the general regime in which the pros and cons, the true and the false, were on an equality, made it very difficult to discover the truth. Dreyfus was not an interesting person at the best, and I had actually no ill feeling towards the Jews, but the passion for self-advertisement peculiar to

the Chosen, and their insensate desire to save a co-religionist, were insupportable to me, as I felt that their attitude tended to demolish the prerogative of the nation. Therefore, in addition to a radical Government, I had now to reckon with the Jews!

France, in a spirit of social conservation, was hostile towards Captain Dreyfus—not because he happened to be a Jew, but because his name served as a pretext for a campaign against the Army, which doubtless originated in Germany. Believing this, I spent money lavishly in favour of my principles, and I was regarded in many quarters as dangerous.

As a result, a plot against me was hatched by the secret societies of the world, comprising Jews, who believed me virulently Anti-Semitic, and foreigners who understood nothing of the point at issue. The yellow press of America censured my actions—in short, the entire press was in favour of the man on Devil's Island.

Fortunately, these bitter attacks did not ruffle my serenity or shake my belief in my star. I simply ignored my persecutors.

My election was cancelled. It was stated that I had purchased votes: an entirely erroneous statement, since the middlemen alone represented the £.s.d. of an election. Once again I proposed myself, with the result that I was returned by a greater majority than before, and I entered the Palais Bourbon once more, triumphant.

That year was notable in many respects. Marchand occupied Fashoda on the 10th of July, as the result of a dangerous adventure instigated by Delcassé, and carried out by Hanotaux at the risk of embroiling us with England.

At Tel-el-Kebir, and at Omdurman, Lord Wolseley and Lord Kitchener achieved, so to speak, the conquest of Egypt. The economic veto of France alone troubled Great Britain,

and when this finally disappeared, the English assumed complete domination in the land of the Pharaohs.

Marchand received a tremendous ovation on his return, particularly from the fair sex, who went positively mad over him. He was a black-bearded man, who gave one the impression of an intelligent Apostle who had forsaken his vocation in order to become a soldier.

France was, however, wrong over the Fashoda question. She wasted the valour of one of her finest soldiers, and she was also guilty of a grave error in diplomacy.

Later, at the outbreak of the Boer War, our chivalry in defence of the weak led us to support the cause upheld by Botha and De Wet. Once again we blundered, as the Boers have eventually become loyal subjects of Great Britain! But, alas! in France politics are always dominated by sentiment.

When Charles Depuy became President of the Council, he voted with the assent of Felix Faure in favour of the *Loi de Déssaisissement*, which, had it been enforced, would have finished the "Affair" once and for all. Arthur Meyer, who, *par parenthèse* merits recognition as being the only Jew hostile to Dreyfus, allied himself with the malcontents, and he deserves a certain modicum of praise in the campaign of which he was nominally the leader. But if the Dreyfusards were impossible, the partisans of Order were hardly less so, and they often justified the attacks levelled against them; in fact, Esterhazy did as much harm to our cause as Cornély did to Dreyfus.

Cornély had once acted as my secretary, but on his resignation I appointed Syveton, an individual who has been the subject of endless gossip, true and false. Formerly a professor at Rheims, he had thrown up his position at the beginning of the campaign against the Army, and on hearing this I asked him to come and see me. Syveton was a good-looking man, with a picturesque pointed beard, and he was never seen with-

out his eyeglass! He was clever but lacking in energy, devoid of principle, and, like most weak natures, capable of violent opinions. His actions almost preceded his thoughts, but nothing can ever excuse or justify the vice attributed to him. He was extremely circumspect in his intercourse with me, and treated me with deferential reserve, mingled with a spice of ironic protection. He ignored my capabilities, and always expected me to do exactly contrary to what really was in my mind, but he devoured my brains and gained from my mentality certain ideas which never left him. Syveton, although a monarchist, possessed Bonapartist sympathies, and occasionally went to Brussels to pay his respects to Prince Victor Bonaparte. He persuaded me to accompany him on one of these pilgrimages, when I had the honour, via M. de Giradin, of an audience. My wife and I afterwards lunched with the Prince, and inspected various glass cases containing intimate souvenirs of the Emperor, comprising his gloves, shoes, and even his pocket pencil.

Prince Victor made himself extremely agreeable, but he disappointed my imagination: he was far more like a *négociateur* and a Prince of the house of Savoy than any offshoot of the Bonapartes.

Syveton often stayed with us at Marais, where he met Barrès and Jules Lemaître, who made much of him. I sometimes think that his vanity was piqued by his position, but I was so useful to him that he never actively resented it.

Madame Syveton was a typical pink and white Flemish beauty, whose passionless exterior served but to conceal hidden fires. She had married Syveton for love, and people were usually well disposed towards her; but I alone realized her secret self, and I knew that it only required the right spark to kindle the flame whose warmth Syveton had never felt. She

was, innocently enough, her husband's evil genius, and she contributed in no small degree to his untimely end.

On the sensational discovery of the secret notes supplied by Vadecard-Schimelpfeng to the Freemasons, notes which condemned certain prominent political persons, Syveton, who had been elected a Deputy, publicly affronted General André. The old sectarian who presided over our military destinies only grasped the hierarchy of the *loges*, and in consequence he used and misused his authority. The story of the "informers" constitutes a blot on the scutcheon of the Third Republic, inasmuch as the noblest officers in France were at the mercy of the vilest and most wicked forms of jealousy.

French Freemasonry and that practised in England are totally dissimilar, as the English aspect of it is religious, and the French outlook is anti-clerical. All the Masons in France were in favour of Dreyfus, and each time an officer attended Mass, he was practically doomed. The secret information-list which revealed the baseness of the Freemasons was mislaid, and it was found by accident by M. Guyot de Villeneuve, who revealed its contents to the Parliament.

After Syveton's impolitic but excusable behaviour, he took refuge in the "hemicycle" [1] in close proximity to me, where I was able to protect him against those of the "Left" who wished to take a mean advantage of him. But violent measures do not often avail, and in order to resort to force, one's motives must be above reproach. Those of Syveton were *not*.

A couple of days afterwards, when I was leaving the Palais Bourbon, I heard the newspaper boys announcing the news of his death! Horrified beyond measure, I rushed to the Avenue de Neuilly and entered his bedroom unannounced. But I was

[1] So called because the French Deputies sit in a room semicircular in shape.

confronted with a terrible spectacle. Syveton lay dead, fully dressed, on his bed . . . one leg was bent almost double under him, his arms hung over the side of the mattress, nobody had troubled to dispose his corpse decently! Perhaps (to do his friends justice) the police had forbidden them to meddle with the body!

I knelt down beside him, and someone whispered: "He asphyxiated himself by gas-poisoning . . . we found him like this." The voice of Mme. Syveton then took up the narrative: "He was very devoted to you . . . something terrible must have happened to have made him take his own life." But my growing suspicions gained colour from the general embarrassment; the whole affair was incomprehensible. When I had last seen Syveton, there was absolutely nothing in his general demeanour to give the slightest hint of suicide. On the contrary, he seemed proud of his actions.

As the flat was now being besieged by members of the League of the Patrie Française, I went home, thoroughly distressed and perplexed, and if I had been ordered to state my opinion, I should have replied unhesitatingly: "He has not killed himself, but he has been forced to commit suicide." Poor Syveton was not tremendously attracted by life; he saw little or nothing ahead of him, and it often required all my friendship to combat his moods of depression.

Through Syveton's good offices, I had paid the election expenses of various municipal councillors, who I imagined would prove the mainstay of the Conservative Party. My candidates were duly elected.

I wished to become a Frenchman worthy of the name, and until now my schemes had proved fairly successful. But I was apparently important only in my own estimation, for I very foolishly imagined that the world was made for me! Thus, always impatient of contradiction, I challenged my cousin

Comte Orlowski to a duel, on account of certain remarks about the French Army.

After endless discussion between the Russian Ambassador and Prince Galitzine, who came expressly from Petrograd to act as Orlowski's second, we met on the Ile de la Grande Jatte situated on the Seine, near Neuilly. My seconds were the Comte de Dion and Julian Dumas, a member of Parliament, and in our *corps à corps* Orlowski's sword pierced my silk shirt, without however wounding me, although his thrust gave the onlookers the impression that I must have been transfixed! Xavier Feuillant, Orlowski's second, who was also a friend of mine, wept unrestrainedly at my fate, but I only laughed and paid no attention whatever to my "mortal" wound. The next moment, I had given my adversary something by which to remember me. He turned pale . . . and fell. I actually feared for his life! But even then, I was not sorry. I had wounded him; in reality, I was glad. The thing that chiefly concerned me was his state of salvation.

We remained on bad terms for a considerable time. But twenty years after, we adjusted our differences. Orlowski is now the Polish Ambassador at Madrid, and we are the best of friends.

I had by this time sampled most of the emotions, but as yet I had not adventured in a racing-stable. However, in 1898 I remedied this omission, and Newling was my first trainer; I replaced him by Weaver, and my horse Sleeping Car brought off several victories. Effendi II, Laruns, Bolide, Balchis, were likewise winners, and I won the Prix de Printemps at Auteuil with Ermerick. I bought Coq from M. Ridgway for 100,000 francs, then a high price, but he met with an accident at Longchamps.

The Comte Sampièri undertook the management of my stables, but I never looked on my horses as representing sport.

All that concerned me was the decorative side of racing, and I liked to watch the effect of my mauve and green colours, seen in conjunction with wonderful horse-flesh against a charming setting of trees and verdure. I disliked the world of jockeys and trainers: politics and art alone touched my soul.

CHAPTER XIII

Not content with duels, elections, racing, palaces and pretty women, I still sought other distractions in life, and, after much thought, I was inspired to give a flower dinner-party for two hundred and fifty guests, followed by a flower ball. "Why should flowers be always *inanimate?*" I asked myself. "So many women have their floral counterparts, and in some cases the resemblance between them is almost uncanny in its similarity."

As the Princess Pauline Metternich, the witty friend of the Empress Eugénie, might easily have represented an immortelle, I sent her a special invitation. But the Princess excused herself on account of her age, saying that if she had been able to accept my hospitality she would have chosen the rôle of a forget-me-not.

Our grand staircase was not yet finished, so I concealed the scaffolding with flowers and illuminated it with Venetian lamps, thus creating an effect which would have enchanted Gainsborough's French contemporary, Hubert Robert!

In this perfumed *mise-en-scène* I remember "Princess Pless," fair as a summer morning, wearing white tulle covered with trails of jasmine, her golden hair entwined with the same sweet flowers and their delicate foliage. The Duchesse d'Uzès was a red carnation (reminiscent of Boulanger), the Duchesse de Luynes looked charming as a white carnation, the Royalist flower, and the Duchesse de La Rochefoucauld represented a conrflower. Thus, these three ladies formed the loveliest tricolour imaginable!

My wife looked her best—in fact, rarely had she appeared so attractive. She had elected to appear as a scarlet poppy, and she wore a petal gown symbolic of the flower, while an enormous poppy formed an effective head-dress.

One of the prettiest women emulated a brier-rose, and whilst we were indulging in a little flirtation, as befitted the hour, we were surprised by her husband, who, always jealous, did not allow his pretty wife to remain long out of his sight.

"Ah, here you are," said he; then, turning to me, he remarked, with intense meaning: "Take care! He who gathers brier-roses must also beware of their thorns!"

This was only too true.

We had not included Mrs. Moore in our list of *invités,* an omission which sorely troubled the good lady, so much that she became positively ill with the complaint known as "hope deferred." At last, unable to endure the agony of suspense any longer she rushed off to see my mother, in whom she confided her woes. "My digestion is completely upset," she lamented, and my mother, who is the most amiable of women, touched by her distress, begged me to send Mrs. Moore a belated invitation. This I did, hoping (to my shame) that she would not have time to arrange a costume. But I had not reckoned with Mrs. Moore—she had already provided herself with one weeks before, and she appeared in our ball-room as a guelder rose.

But what kind of a guelder rose? None with which our eyes were familiar! Mrs. Moore looked more like a sugared Easter egg, than any rose, known or unknown! She carried a tall white walking-stick *à la mode de* Louis XV, on the top of which a stuffed green parrot swayed to and fro. Her entrance was the signal for a general outburst of gaiety, and the spirit of carnival pervaded the dancers, who joined hands and romped round the guelder rose, much to her delighted astonishment.

The men present wore coloured evening dress clothes; mine, I remember, were gray with red facings. It was a most enjoyable evening, and my charming flowers reversed the decrees of Nature by going to bed at sunrise!

About this period of my married life, I often had the honour of meeting H.M. the Queen of Naples, one of the four fair sisters whose names are synonymous with tragedy. Her Majesty was always charming, and I was an enthusiastic admirer of the dignity with which she supported her fallen fortunes and her many sorrows.

The Queen of Naples gave me the impression of that swan-like grace peculiar to the Empress Elizabeth of Austria and the Duchesse d'Alençon: and one could not help remembering the shining courage which had given her the name of the "Héroïne of Gaïta," in memory of the occasion when she and her husband defended the Pope on his placing himself under the protection of Ferdinand II. The Queen and I had many interests in common: like myself, she was a good political hater, and we discussed our various enemies in a spirit of sympathetic understanding.

Queen Isabella of Spain afforded a complete contrast to the poetical and idealistic Queen of Naples. A good-natured woman, she possessed a great capacity for affection, and was always (even when she unbent) a very great lady! She was immensely corpulent, had clever eyes, and always wore a blond wig. She came to my house on one occasion accompanied by the Duc and Duchesse de Luynes, Prince and Princesse Dominique Radziwill, the Comte and Comtesse de Lambertye, and some Spaniards whose names I have forgotten.

As the Queen's superfluous flesh did not allow her to go from one floor to the other without loss of breath, I conceived the idea of having Her Majesty carried upstairs in a palanquin. During the ascent Queen Isabella's sharp eyes noticed the

fleurs-de-lis which decorated the ceiling. The Queen at once gave vent to a shriek of joy, and, waving her lace handkerchief as if in greeting, called out: "Ah, my beloved fleurs-de-lis! What happiness to see you again!"

The Queen then resided at the Palais de Castille, on the site of which the Hotel Majestic stands to-day, and one afternoon when we were taking tea with her, an aide-de-camp announced the arrival of the Ex-Empress Eugénie.

The Spanish sovereign at once repaired to the head of the State staircase to welcome her "good sister" followed by her suite and her guests, and as the Spaniard who had become a Frenchwoman slowly ascended the stairs, she saw Queen Isabella leaning on her gold-headed stick, waiting to receive her. Both sovereigns were now old ladies, and both had led colourful lives, but whereas Eugénie had mainly obeyed the dictates of her head, Isabella had been chiefly actuated by the impulses of her heart! Eugénie, in the character of a subject, curtsied low to Queen Isabella, and we were all greatly touched by the sight of the meeting of these once powerful sovereigns, one of whom still seemed the symbol of the artificial graces of her era, whilst the other, notwithstanding her corpulence and her crude blond wig, was every inch a Queen.

The Palais de Castille was one of the most hideous royal residences imaginable. It had been built by Napoleon III, and it consisted of a series of arcades supported by ungainly columns and adorned with Oriental floor-coverings. The china and porcelain were only worthy to be broken in a thousand pieces, and the royal dinner-set with its painted fleur-de-lis was a positive offence to the eyes. The silver was by inferior makers, and the Winter Garden deserved instant demolition.

However, visitors to the Palais de Castille were received by an aide-de-camp with much ceremony and ushered up the red-

carpeted staircase into an immense desert of a *salon*, where the Queen sat in an oasis of plush-covered furniture, amid groves of palms and plaster statues.

It is remarkable, when one considers the question seriously, how little taste the generality of monarchs possess. Apart from their palaces and the setting prepared for them, they rarely display any originality. And even those who manage to escape from the rut of royalty are mainly copyists!

Shortly after the visit of the Empress Eugénie, we were again honoured by an invitation to dine at the Palais de Castille. On this occasion the Queen's two daughters, the Infanta Paz of Bavaria and the Infanta Eulalia, were present: the latter, then as now, all vivacity and intellect, and a delight to the eyes; her sister, who is small, dark and retiring, does not resemble her in the least.

Cardinal Lorenzelli and their Imperial Highnesses the Comte and Comtesse d'Eu were also among the guests, and after dinner Mounet Sully, with consummate nonchalance, recited some of Baudelaire's scabrous verses. The Queen was as frankly amused at the poems as she was by the sight of the nuncio, who found it necessary to hide his blushes behind his silken skullcap!

My memories of Parisian life would be incomplete without mentioning the wonderful *salon* presided over by the Comtesse de Loynes—a *salon* on the lines of those made famous in the eighteenth century by Madame du Deffand and Julie de Lespinasse.

The Comtesse de Loynes began her career as Jeanne de Tourbey, a member of the oldest profession in the world. She had now retired with an adequate recompense for those strenuous years, and had found social salvation in a marriage with the Comte de Loynes. Jeanne was now more virtuous than

any virgin, and she gladdened the eyes of many old friends when they saw her taking round the offertory bag during the celebration of Mass at St. Philippe-du-Roule.

When I first made the acquaintance of the Comtesse, she was an old woman, but she possessed the greatest political influence of anyone in Paris, and had enjoyed the intimate friendships of Prince Napoleon, the Goncourts, Renan and a crowd of other famous people. She occupied a stuffy *entresol* in the Champs Elysées: her drawing-room, like that of Queen Isabella, was a study in plush. A shoddy Meissonier, a portrait of Jules Lemaître, and one of the Comtesse herself decorated the walls, whilst the mantelpiece was dominated by a nude Minerva in many-coloured marbles, the work of Gerôme. Devoid of her traditional headgear, the goddess gazed with stupefaction at the assembled company.

Madame de Loynes favoured light-coloured gowns, but her eccentricities in dress were forgotten when one fell under the spell of her wit and fascination. She was gifted with the almost uncanny precocity of the Parisian *gamine*, and she was likewise an artist in wire-pulling. On behalf of Jules Lemaître, she successfully interested the most important newspaper editors, chiefly those representing the *Echo de Paris* and the *Gaulois* and even the *Croix*. Rochefort alone was excepted. Courage, however, was not one of Madame de Loynes' strongest characteristics, and she rarely lent her influence in furtherance of hazardous adventures. Briefly, she took no risks, and this curious timidity nullified her power to no little extent, save in the domain of the Académie, where she reigned supreme, and where she practically "made" the Academicians. Without the dozen "consents" at Mme. de Loynes' peculiar disposal, it was extremely difficult for anyone to gain admittance into this particular kingdom of heaven.

Deschanel was one of the most privileged habitués of the

salon presided over by Mme. de Loynes, but she liked me better than anyone else, as I amused and interested her. She smiled at my love-affairs and, in listening to my confidences concerning them, fought her past battles once again. Her mentality appreciated my political ambitions, and in her imagination she visualized me as an Academician and an Ambassador —and she understood how to tell me so. I had not the same illusions concerning myself, but as she liked to plan out this Utopian future I never attempted to shatter her castles—in Castellane!

Her apparent *naïveté* often deceived really clever men, and Lemaître regarded her as a composite governess, mother, sister—and perhaps a mistress? I, for one, never believed their friendship to be platonic! Towards Mme. de Loynes, Lemaître manifested a curious sort of humility, and she treated him, figuratively speaking, like a child first learning to walk, who dares not let go his nurse's hand for fear of falling!

Jacques Piou was another habitué of the *salon,* where I also met Henri Houssaye, who generally dined with Mme. de Loynes on Fridays; but Barrès, who was greatly in request, did not come as often as our hostess would have liked. I quite understood why she was so desirous of attracting him, as, although quite a young man, he already possessed influence; he was the "white hope" of the party he represented, and he played an important part in the campaign of *revanche* over Alsace-Lorraine. A marvellous artist, he exhaled a peculiar charm which increased as one knew him more intimately, whilst his serious life-work actually counted for as much as his literary success.

Adrien Hébrard, the editor of the *Temps,* one of the wittiest men of our time, occasionally dined with Mme. de Loynes, and laid down the law with the strong accent peculiar to natives of the South of France. His behaviour towards the Countess in-

sinuated that he possessed a particular claim on her friendship, and it was amusing to see how this secret understanding aroused the jealousy of Jules Lemaître.

Hébrard's comment when told of the death of his old friend is worthy of repetition. "Poor dear," he sighed. "I hope she has not gone to another *demi-monde*."

Albert Vandal, with his birdlike head and thin body, looked like an animated buttonhook, and was more notable by reason of his resources than from any originality of his ideas. He was a Bonapartist, simply because he had once voted for the Empire, and he possessed no real political convictions. But the honest, short-sighted man was gifted with a marvellous memory, and he was conversant with every detail connected with the life-story of Napoleon.

The Loynes *salon* represented a veritable kaleidoscope of humanity. Hither came would-be aspirants for the Académie, hoping to incline the ear of the Comtesse favourably to their claims for recognition, but the most outstanding figure of those days was Léon Daudet—the *enfant terrible* of the Republic! Never was there gaiety so light-hearted, never irony so subtle, never such a polished and dangerous adversary. His dreams are real. It is impossible for Daudet to be a plotter—his instinct is rather to make the mad onslaught of a bull, and his genial and attractive face is but the index to an equally charming disposition.

Rochefort hated his old friend, but his dislike did not prevent him from visiting her. This anti-Semitic gentleman with revolutionary tendencies who was as sensitive as a child, was pre-eminently an agent of destruction. When the Dreyfusards were in power, he sought to annihilate them, indeed he would have gone back on any friend who happened to be top dog! He was violently anti-clerical, by turns simple-minded and blasphemous, but he was less witty in his conversation than

in his articles. Rochefort knew real happiness only when he exercised his authority during the Commune. But although his life-work is barren, his personality survives and many curious stories are related of him.

Judet, who was always welcomed at the *salon*, was known chiefly by reason of his campaign of the Patrie Française. He was insanely proud of himself, and he insisted on his friends' being equally proud of him.

One day I heard a lady talking to M. Fuchs, and impressing him with the important fact that her husband had "saved France." This lady was none other than Madame Judet, who really believed the truth of her statement! Like George IV, who thought he had been present at the Battle of Waterloo simply because he had talked so much about it, Judet likewise imagined that he had actually saved France from extinction, and what Judet decreed his wife accepted as gospel.

But we all existed in a house of make-believe. Mme. de Loynes was a sham Conservative, Syveton a sham Republican, Houssaye a sham fighter, Rochefort shammed good nature. Coppée alone was sincere in his convictions.

Coppée, in his turn, was absolutely dominated by Deroulède, that long-nosed, long-legged man so reminiscent of Don Quixote whose intelligence was not on a par with his talents or his character.

Marcel Habert, his lieutenant, acted as Deroulède's "whipping boy," and received the same measure of condemnation as his master, without however obtaining the recognition which his many good qualities deserved.

The *salon* of Mme. de Loynes came to an end with her death, and nothing similar exists in Paris to-day. The art of conversation is lost for ever, and Terpsichore has usurped its place in society. People only jazz nowadays; they have no breath left for anything else.

At that period I suffered from a general condition of *tædium vitæ*. I was not really happy, although I had a wife who was quite in the picture, and the sweetest children imaginable. But there was always a fly in my particular ointment, and although I sought distraction in various ways, my greatest consolation lay in art. This at least never disillusioned me!

My feeling of ennui quickly vanished when I heard that the château of Grignan was in the market. It was here that my ancestors had lived from the time of Francis I until the reign of Louis XVI, and here, in a stately mausoleum on the hill-side, many of them sleep their last long sleep.

The memory of the illustrious dead at once incited me to purchase Grignan, and it was as well that I did so, as the burial-place of my family now constitutes the only landed property which I possess!

Grignan, one of the most romantic castles in France, was built in feudal times and afterwards added to by Philibert de l'Orme, being finally completed by Mansard. The château occupies a unique situation on the heights, and it is encircled by numerous fortifications from which the main structure rises proud and luminous: I say "luminous," but the description conveys but a faint impression of the honey-hued walls which seem to hold the sunbeams of centuries imprisoned within them. From its mountain aerie, Grignan dominates three valleys thickly planted with olive-trees, which my imagination has often likened to an advancing army, especially when the *mistral* sweeps through its ranks, and one catches the glint of moving spear-heads of silver foliage, whilst the sombre cypresses outlined against the horizon seem like notes of exclamation at the beauty of the landscape which surrounds them.

The "Convention" having ordered the demolition of Grignan, the roof was removed, but the walls were left standing, and it is interesting to recall the fact that Grignan formed part of the

dot of the last of the Monteil-Adhémars when she married a Castellane in 1550.

Madame de Sévigné, who lived at Grignan for some years, is buried in the family mausoleum, together with her daughter and her granddaughter, Madame de Simiane, and this alone constituted one of my chief reasons for purchasing the property. It was my intention to found there a museum for Southern France, in which to enshrine the most important historical souvenirs of our family, and incidentally to glorify the memory of Madame de Sévigné. I also wished to arrange annual gatherings of celebrated men of letters, and to seek out new mental treasures in that part of France which has already given so many of her sons to literature and art.

But unfortunately my dream-projects never materialized. Some few years later, necessity compelled me to sell Grignan, which now belongs to Mrs. X, whose ignorance has succeeded in ruining what was once a perfect example of French architecture.

The purchase of Grignan unfortunately added fuel to the fire of the hostility now displayed towards me by the Goulds. My brothers-in-law were especially vexed that the family fortunes should be wasted in such a manner; in fact, I think the spirit of old J. G. himself must have returned from the shades in order to protest against my extravagance.

But was I actually a spendthrift? *Most assuredly, no!* The only indiscretion of which I was then guilty consisted in buying too much and too quickly, and I did not imagine that it would be impossible to spread the payments for my costly acquisitions over a certain time. I certainly never contemplated settling my accounts directly they were presented.

Among my many purchases from a famous dealer, I had a doubt of the genuineness of one or two, and accordingly I asked the dealer to take them back and cancel the price. This he re-

fused to do, giving as his reason that these pieces had formed part of a "lot" and, as such, had no special price. He then added insult to injury by demanding the whole of my outstanding account! This was indeed an impertinence and one unworthy of a man in whom I had hitherto reposed implicit confidence.

As my wife's fortune was in trust, and she could not touch a penny of capital, the dealer conceived the diabolical idea of attacking the Gould trust in New York, and he brought an action against me in the high courts, knowing only too well that such a proceeding would not add to my domestic happiness.

The sum in dispute ran into several millions, and although I tried in vain to justify myself, I was overwhelmed by a torrent of abuse and recrimination in the American press.

At length, after interminable pleadings, the dealer, who was averse to expert opinions, intimated his willingness to reduce my indebtedness, and took back the articles in dispute; but as I was ordered to pay more in settlement than I could possibly afford, I besought the aid of George Gould, believing that, as a shrewd man of business, he would appreciate the financial value of art as an investment, and not force me to realize at an unfavourable moment. "Don't you understand that, judiciously 'harvested,' I can double your sister's fortune with my artistic investments?" I said desperately. But George Gould, like most business men, placed no reliance on brains or inanimate beauty as profitable speculations. It is remarkable that the shrewdest financiers smile when they lose thousands on running a theatre, and pay no heed when a hole in the earth swallows money and makes not the slightest effort to disgorge it! Men risk millions on similar speculations, but I have never never yet heard of one who recognized the value of brains or who backed them for all he was worth. Pegasus and his riders are therefore of little value—perhaps because the horse

is winged and his riders have not been brought up as jockeys!

I had to face the anger and reproaches of my wife. To do Anna justice, she had every right to expect that she would not be worried over money matters, but if she had proved herself more sympathetic towards me at this crisis in my fortunes, I should have become her slave for life. Alas! she sided with her family, and she was openly contemptuous of my assertions that I knew my especial speculations would prove highly profitable to her in the future.

George Gould and his brothers Howard, Frank and Edwin possessed not the slightest knowledge of art. Helen and Anna followed in the family footsteps, and the entire clan looked upon the generality of antiques as—rubbish! It was impossible to convince them otherwise.

One day I showed George Gould a set of four arm-chairs and a settee upholstered in yellow tapestry treated with decorative parrots and garlands of flowers. This wonderful set was one of Berain's finest examples, and I gladly purchased it for 60,000 francs. But this American merely glanced at these lovely products of a decorative age, and remarked, with a smile of peculiar contempt: "Why, the whole caboodle isn't worth twopence."

To-day Seligmann is asking 1,500,000 francs (but not at 118 francs to the pound, *bien entendu!*) for these same pieces. They may therefore be said to have increased in value, and as facts are stubborn things, it is incontestable that an investment which in 1898 stood at 60,000 francs must have justified itself by representing what it stands at, twenty-six years later.

"Why ever do you buy these old things?" continued my brother-in-law. But by this time I was almost speechless with rage, and when at last I found strength to speak, I voiced the historic remark of the Prince de Sagan. "For my own pleasure," I said. George Gould gazed at me in positive horror,

and I realized that my retort courteous had destroyed any hopes of an American *entente*. Nevertheless, in the light of subsequent events, I claim to represent the *best investment that the Goulds have ever made!*

CHAPTER XIV

The various financial worries which now encompassed me obliged me once again to visit the United States, but before leaving France I had occasion to interview Waldeck-Rousseau touching a matter which concerned my *arrondissement.*

Waldeck-Rousseau frankly detested me, and I returned his hatred with compound interest. He was a man of ice and acid, and each word that he uttered was of that nature. Thanks to the weakness of our former colleague, M. Aynard, Waldeck-Rousseau easily obtained the majority of nine, which gave him full power to exercise a real dictatorship, and his unvarying formula insisted that "the political life of a country is made up of quarters of an hour." To anyone reared, as I had been, on the entirely different principles of Talleyrand, such a statement was monstrous!

It so happened that, as a result of my questions in Parliament bearing on a speech made by Joseph Reinach at Digne, General Galliffet left the Ministry of War, and it was then that Waldeck-Rousseau conceived a sullen and vindictive hatred of me, in order to satisfy which he resorted to very deplorable intrigues.

The first intimation of his campaign against me appeared in an article in the *Figaro,* but as I was then on the high seas and wireless telegraphy was unknown, I heard nothing of these calumnies until after I had landed in New York. My detractors had therefore a clear eight days in which to disseminate their lies, private and political. I was described to all intents and purposes in the *Figaro* as a bankrupt, although it was well known that I was only temporarily embarrassed. However, it

was apparent that my enemies found themselves unable to forgive me for having been, in many respects, more fortunate than themselves, and they doubtless wished that I had emulated the miserly Marquise de Sesmaisons, who preferred to cut off the white border of her daily paper and pin it inside her neckband rather than buy a clean linen collar for the same purpose!

The campaign in the *Figaro* not unnaturally provoked intense interest in the United States, but my enemies were powerless to affect the warmth of my reception—simply because Americans attach no importance whatever to personal attacks in the press. Nevertheless, I resented the publicity so much that when my wife and I passed through Washington, it occurred to me to ask President Roosevelt whether he could put an end to the tiresome gossip of the reporters.

The President received my wife and myself at the White House; he was extremely courteous and charming, but I had attributed powers to him which he did not possess, and he declared it would be both impossible and unwise to attempt to muzzle the American press. I thanked Mr. Roosevelt, and at the same time complimented him on his official residence, since the White House afforded me (like Washington itself) immense artistic pleasure. The simplicity of the Louis XVI interior was not detracted from by any undue ostentation, the service was perfect, and I ruefully contrasted the White House with the Elysée. But the French and American Republics are as the poles apart: the one is typical of Destruction, the other is symbolic of the best developments of the art of construction!

Ignoring the vulgarity of the omnipotent yellow press, I determined to teach the *Figaro* that I was not to be trifled with. M. de Rodays was then editor, and I straightway cabled him that I would box his ears soundly on my return to Paris. In the meantime, my father had written an open letter which was

quoted in several important newspapers. The letter began thus: "If there is any dirty work to be done, the *Figaro* is sure to undertake it!" He had at least the courage of his opinions!

Two months passed and we returned to France. We left the boat at Cherbourg one Monday morning, and I decided to box de Rodays' ears soundly the next day.

In company with my father and my secretary, Jean Morel, we went hotfoot in search of my caluminator, whom we found at his house and, to do him justice, quite willing to meet me face to face.

I wasted no time in preliminaries. "Sir," said I, "I have come to ask you whether you accept responsibility for certain articles published in your newspaper."

"Most assuredly," replied de Rodays. "I am not the actual writer of the articles to which you refer, but I am quite willing to take any blame for their publication."

De Rodays' insolence made me furious. I could not restrain my overwrought feelings, and, not caring what I did, I slapped him on the face several times in succession. . . . My victim was so taken aback that he made no attempt to defend himself, but emitted a series of squeals which only served to infuriate me still further.

After giving de Rodays another resounding slap, I threw my card on his bureau and went out of the room with my nose in the air, saying, as I did so:

"Now I shall look forward to your return call!"

The same afternoon, the Boulevards re-echoed with the shrill voices of the news-vendors who were "broadcasting" the incident. Paris had endless food for gossip, and tongues wagged untiringly.

In due course, M. de Rodays' seconds, M. Prestat and M. Périvier put in an appearance; I referred them to the Comte de Dion and Gaston Jollivet; and it was arranged that the duel

should take place in the Parc des Princes, that charming locality near Paris, at Boulogne-sur-Seine.

As I was the aggressor, the choice of weapons fell to my opponent, who decided in favour of pistols—at the greatest distance—and with one shot! This was my third duel and, as before, I experienced no emotion whatever. I took it as a matter of course, and as the only solution possible for my cause of complaint. When we arrived at the Parc des Princes, de Rodays' seconds asked me whether I had any loose change in my pockets—a necessary precaution in view of the weapons used.

"Such a question, after the statements as to my bankruptcy published by the *Figaro*, is childish," I answered.

At the signal to fire, my bullet lodged in de Rodays' thigh, and the unfortunate man fell to the ground bleeding profusely. Seized by some unaccountable emotion, I ran forward and clasped de Rodays' hand. He returned the pressure.

"Thank you, monsieur," he said feebly, upon which I told him not without reason that he had nothing for which to be grateful to me. Once again honour was satisfied, but some of my charming friends, unduly anxious about my fate, had begged me to tell them where the duel was to take place, and not wishing them to meet, I very wisely named a different place to each fair inquirer, which goes to prove that often a possible tragedy does not lack a humorous side.

But I had not finished with the *Figaro*, and I was fortunately enabled to do the paper a great deal of harm.

It fell on evil days: de Rodays threw up his position, and Périvier, who became sole editor, was able to save the paper from extinction only by lending it to Maurras.

However, Gaston Calmette, who replaced Périvier, was shrewd enough to realize that I might prove more profitable as a friend

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than as an enemy, and he therefore ignored my differences with his predecessor. I accepted the proffered olive-branch, as, not having succeeded in suppressing the *Figaro*, it occurred to me to use it as my future political mouthpiece.

My first series of articles dealt with the readjustment of the principle thoroughfares of Paris, and I endeavoured to demonstrate how impossible it is for any nation afflicted with ever-changing governments to attain the heights of harmonious construction; more especially when the heads of the State happen to be men of negative conceptions and little imagination. No President of the French Republic, I pointed out, had left any definite imprint on the art of his particular epoch.

The Republic indeed, will leave to posterity neither one of the great ensembles such as Versailles or Nancy, nor a complete monument like Notre Dame or Chembord. It has not provided a single isolated building, picture or statue which satisfies our logical instinct, and I also explained in my articles that, as we live in a condition bordering on anarchy, we cannot possibly have a contemporary style.

I gave my readers as an example the *Trouée des Invalides*—the vertical ax which cuts the Avenue of the Champs Elysées, formed by the actual Avenue Alexandre III and the Avenue de Marigny.

In pre-Republican days monarchy conceived a whole quarter of Paris which constituted the road between the royal dwelling, the centre of the city and of the kingdom, and the châteaux of the sovereign: Saint-Germain, Marly, Versailles.

Paris therefore possessed a majestic axis formed by the Louvre, the Tuileries, the Place Louis V and the Champs Elysées, and just as in ancient France every thought, every enthusiasm, every recourse tended towards the King, and every direct impulse emanated from the Monarch, a direct and

splendid road conducted his subjects to his dwelling. Thus the buildings of the capital faithfully translated the political and social condition of the country itself.

In our days, under the pretext of embellishing, a breach was made in an ensemble which had been respected even by Napoleon, and the *Trouée des Invalides* is the great artistic thought of reign. From the Arc de Triomphe to the Louvre, nothing should be left open; and I deplore that this road does not lead us exclusively where common sense means us to go, *i.e.*, from the barrier to the Louvre, or from the Louvre to the barrier. The opening, where it has been made, is nonsensical, as I cannot conceive any triumphal road leading to a house of retreat for old soldiers. Placed outside the axis of Paris, the Invalides, with its parade-grounds, its moats and its guns, and its dome which indicates the elevation of the soul above human misery, is a great and charming work. But a railway station and gardens have diminished its grandeur. Therefore, in order to show the Invalides from the Champs Elysées, a big hole has been made, and if that be a conception of reason, it is plain that I have lost my own.

The best excuse that one can make is to imagine that certain minds wished to establish a correspondence, a symmetry, a communication between the Invalides and the palace of the Elysées—the former hotel of Madame de Pompadour. But such an idea might lead to disrespectful reflections.

The truth is that in bygone days moral reasons made it imperative that the house of Madame de Pompadour remain outside of the royal road.

Furthermore, in order to prove to what an extent this opening on the road lacks sense, nothing balances it on either side, and the two frightful palaces which have been erected do not respond to any thought or use. The large one, where casual picture exhibitions and horse-shows are held, will end by be-

coming another railway station, and the smaller will possess a roulette and gambling-tables like the casino at Baden-Baden. These buildings do not embody any ideal, and they are as ugly in themselves as the Trocadero and the Eiffel Tower!

This architectural anarchy has been caused by the diversity of governments and by the weakness of the numerous heads of the State who have succeeded one another in recent years. None of the latter has been endowed with the necessary culture for giving an impetus to the art of his period.

Casimir-Périer, a nervous pallid figure, passed like a wraith through the Elysées, where his short tenure of office represented nothing save unfashionable middle-class *milieu.*

Felix Faure, who looked like a country cattle-dealer, possessed not one iota of taste, but he was more far-seeing and nationalistic than many of his colleagues. His preoccupation with the Dreyfus Affair prevented him from adventuring in affairs of intellect, and he devoted much of his period of office to trying to prevent the country from being engulfed in the quicksands of political dangers.

His assumption of a military pose enraged me, as Felix Faure on horseback seemed always expecting to be saluted as a French general, and not as the President of the French Republic!

Mlle. Faure, his daughter, married Georges Goyau, the remarkable author of works on Catholicism, Germany and modern history, whose contributions to literature will surely constitute his finest monument.

As for Emile Loubet, that little dried French plum of a man, it was impossible for him to understand anything about architecture. He was, in every respect, the embodiment of weakness.

Under the regime of these petty-minded souls, I was forced to protect myself against an ever-increasing hostility which eventually dragged me in the full blaze of the limelight of

publicity. The theatres hardly ever produced a modern play that did not contain some reference to me; I was the inspiration of revue-writers, and the hero of café-concerts! My portrait was to be seen everywhere, even my baptismal name became public property, and the man in the street invariably alluded to me as "Boni!"

I moved in the midst of this turmoil aloof, disdainful and unheeding. I defended my opinions, simply because I was still convinced of my infallibility! And in order to get rid of some of my superfluous energy, I occasionally contributed to the *Echo de Paris,* the *Gaulois,* the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and several English magazines.

My gallant bearing, which made me popular with the public, excited a thousand jealousies in my immediate circle; but unfortunately I refused to see what others saw, or to listen to the warnings of my friends, and I thus became the agent of my own destruction!

Restless and dissatisfied, I now decided to become a newspaper proprietor; I thereupon bought the *Soir,* and appointed Gaston Pollonais editor-in-chief. He was a clever man, who incurred heavy expenses, which, however, troubled me not at all, as my vanity was flattered at owning an organ in the press whose vigorous policy made itself *felt,* and during the Dreyfus Affair the *Soir* had an enormous circulation.

Pollonais was the subject of many amusing adventures. Having become (without any apparent reason) the friend of the more or less influential members of my party, he thought it tactful to abjure the faith of his ancestors, and he lost no time in being received into the arms of Mother Church. Madame de Loynes was invited metaphorically to "hold him" at the baptismal font, greatly to the satisfaction of the members of the League who took the whole thing very seriously, and who never wearied of extolling the virtues of the neophyte and his

godmother. However, notwithstanding my anti-Semitic attitude in the Dreyfus Affair, I myself was once taken for a Jew.

One afternoon, when I was driving in the Bois with my wife, and when, as usual, our magnificent turn-out was the observed of all observers, my carriage was "held up" in close proximity to a humble *fiacre*, whose driver recognized me and hailed me with a cheerful "Good afternoon!" I returned his salutation, but my action had unwittingly incurred the displeasure of the lady of the *fiacre*, who rose from her seat like an offended goddess and, turning in my direction, she shouted: "Don't give yourself such airs! Why, you're nothing but a dirty Jew!"

I looked down at the lady from the superior height afforded by my gee springs. "For once, madame, you are wrong," I said. At that moment the police allowed the traffic to proceed, and my thoroughbreds soon left the *fiacre* far behind.

During our stay at Cannes in 1898, the French yacht club lost the cup to England, but as it lay in our power to regain it at Cowes, the Prince of Wales, who wished me to compete, urged me to build a racing-yacht. Acting on his wishes, I built the *Anna*, and sent her to Cowes in the summer of 1899.

The regatta that year was charming. In fact, the whole "week" was brilliant, and everyone showed us the greatest kindness, notably Lord Charles Beresford, then Admiral of the Fleet. Our guests on the *Walhalla* included the Duke and Duchesse de Luynes the Marquise de Gallifet, the Comte Louis de Contaut-Biron and the Comte de Gallifet, and I gave a dinner on board the yacht in honour of the Prince of Wales.

My scheme of decoration was unusual. Chinese screens, tables and arm-chairs were disposed on deck in order to produce the effect of an open-air drawing-room, and when His Royal Highness arrived, he found the officers of the yacht lined

up on either side of the gangway to salute him. I had sent to London for 4,000 tea-roses which I had arranged in the similitude of a perfumed carpet. The effect was artistic beyond words, and in order to harmonize with the nautical surroundings, all my servants were dressed as sailors.

The Prince, who sat next to my wife, was very affable and charming to her, and after dinner His Royal Highness settled himself comfortably on deck in a rocking-chair and, smoking his particular brand of enormous cigars, listened to the music of a Japanese orchestra—which had never been nearer Japan than Montmartre!

"The Circus Girl" was then running at the Gaiety, and my "Japanese," wishing to be quite English and up to date, suddenly burst into Connie Ediss' song "High Society," much to the amusement of the royal visitor, especially when they declared their intention of having horses with nice long tails—"If my papa were the Prince of Wales!"

Moved by the enchantment of the hour and her own prospective happiness, Lady Randolph Churchill told me of her engagement to a man twenty years younger than herself. "What does age matter when one is in love?" she said, and I had not the heart to disillusion her.

"But you must promise me not to tell a living soul," concluded Lady Randolph, and, honoured by her confidence, I naturally promised to be silent as the grave. Judge my surprise, however, when I discovered, a few hours later, that my secret was everybody's secret, Lady Randolph having told all my guests exactly the same thing!

I have rarely met any woman of such mentality or charm as Lady Randolph Churchill, and as a young girl she must have been superlatively beautiful. When I knew her she was still lovely, and I always admired her dark hair, expressive eyes and olive complexion. I shall always remember her

witty remark when her second husband remarried the talented and handsome actress who has delighted innumerable playgoers.

"Well," said Lady Randolph, "George evidently has a penchant for brunettes—I'm always taken for a gipsy—but as for Mrs. Pat, why, she's nothing more or less than an ink-bottle!"

Lady Randolph's tragic death has left a gap in English society which it is almost impossible to fill. But, curiously enough, it would perhaps be difficult to imagine a woman of her intense vitality old! Souls like that of Lady Randolph burn out, and Destiny, occasionally kind, gives to such the gift of death without the horrors of a lingering illness under the accumulated weight of years.

The Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and the Duke of York (now King George V), also honoured us with a visit to the *Walhalla*, but his present Majesty thought that the *salon* was too dark, and that the general effect ought to be white. So, like a good courtier, I promised to transform darkness into light before I revisited Cowes.

Alas! Not only did the *Anna* lose the cup, but her propeller broke in the open sea. Once again Mr. Hors was adjudged the victor, so in order to console ourselves for our disappointment, we went to Goodwood, and afterwards to Scotland and Ireland.

After an enjoyable stay at Dunrobin, we visited Dublin, where we dined at the Viceregal Lodge. Lord Cadogan was then Viceroy, and I was not a little surprised to see that an English nobleman was treated as a King in Ireland. The friends who addressed him by his Christian name in London, knew him as "Your Excellency" in Dublin, whilst the ladies who favoured him with a handshake in town, now curtsied low to him at Viceregal Lodge.

I acquired a beautiful Irish hunter, Coquaygamecock, at the Dublin horse-show as I thought he would make an admirable

follower of my Touraine "drags," but our "jumps" were beneath his contempt, and as I respected his views on the subject, I eventually sent him back to the Emerald Isle.

When we were passing through London in October, 1899, on our way to Blenheim, I was fortunate enough to witness a unique display of what I can only describe as the *strength and unity of the British nation,* when news of the battle of Kimberley had just reached London and the arrival of Queen Victoria coincided with it. As the old Queen drove through the streets, a scene of indescribable enthusiasm took place, and one instinctively felt the indissoluble spirit of England that lay behind it. All minds seemed actuated by a single thought—that of making the Queen understand she was supported *by the whole country* and that she possessed the confidence and affection of the nation.

With any nation like the English, victory is always a foregone conclusion, as the good people *insist* upon the idea. The South African War, of course, proves no exception, and the Boers are now the most devoted adherents of their one-time enemies.

About this time Jules Guérin took possession of a house in the Rue de Chabrol, which he barricaded in the nature of a fort, from which he defied the Ministry. His action afforded Waldeck-Rousseau a necessary pretext for attacking his adversaries in the high court, and I threw myself into political life with renewed interest. Jules Lemaître, however, never understood my passion for politics and someone acquainted me with his malicious comment: "The Comte is always a little heavy and he is also lacking in a sense of humor."

But comments, favourable or the reverse, did not affect me, and as I have afforded food for endless gossip, surely I may claim to be regarded as a public benefactor!

Women in particular were invariably curious and interested

in my doings, and I was amused to find that the legend of my so-called immoralities emanated from the most virtuous sources. But if the femininity of the great world is unavoidably born shocked, this same prudish femininity leaves nothing to the imagination when once it succumbs to its own particular form of temptation.

Nevertheless the women of the French aristocracy are not so complaisant as is popularly supposed. A charming lady of my acquaintance happened to attract the admiration of a well-known foreign royalty who made no secret of the hoped-for-result of his attentions. But when at last, emboldened by desire, he proposed a rendezvous, the lady replied: "I should never dream of doing such a thing, Monseigneur. I have been well brought up, and I have always been taught to remember that a woman of breeding must on no account compromise herself with two kinds of men—Princes or menservants."

CHAPTER XV

I HAVE always regarded myself as more or less the plaything of Destiny, but I must admit that during my chequered career I have experienced almost phenomenal luck. At this period, however, I stood, to use a hackneyed metaphor, on the edge of a volcano—the volcano in this case being the activities of the Goulds' advisers.

Various sentimental adventures came to complicate my already many-coloured existence by rendering it more brilliant. They were, however, to change the metaphor, the orange-peel on which I was destined to slip.

My wife did not understand me. She lent her ear to her family lawyers, and to the various Americans who gave her perfidious advice and insisted that it was impossible for any good to come out of a Castellane. And, bearing in mind that domestic silence is somewhat golden, Anna took the knowledge to her heart, and passed her days in considering my manifold iniquities instead of discussing them.

My third son was born during the elections, and Madame de Castellane, yielding to a suggestion made by the Duchesse d'Uzès, conceived the charming idea of investing the sum of a hundred thousand francs in aid of abandoned babies. This good work was carried out by the devoted Madame Charpentier, the president of the charity, and to-day the Institution of La Pouponnière has a specially endowed wing bearing the name of Gould.

My three children, perfect and charming, were growing up between parents whose intimacy was insensibly diminishing daily.

A more worldly man than myself would most certainly have put up a nest-egg from the vast sums of money which passed through my hands. But I was not of this calibre, and I did not think that I had any right to do such a thing, so conscientious scruples prevented me from helping myself. But I was quite aware of the value of money, and judging from the present-day price of my artistic investments, I think I have every right to be conceded certain of the qualities of a shrewd man of business.

The 7,800 metres of land which we purchased in the Avenue du Bois, and for which we paid 300 francs the metre, are each worth three thousand to-day, and I have been told that Mme. de Talleyrand has been offered a sum of eight millions for the château of Marais, which originally cost (with 1,300 hectares of land) 1,200,000 francs! Added to these fortunate investments, the works of art and jewels which I purchased at this time have increased in value a hundred times.

Thus the legend of my prodigality is more or less founded on idle gossip, and it has not lessened with the passage of years. I have likewise been accused of wasting my wife's fortune on certain charming friends. There is only one possible answer to this charge. Although I may be considered to lack gallantry, I confess that the idea could never have occurred to me to recompense the smiles of a charming friend. As it happened, flirtations rarely became more than harmless, as the haunting dread of any sentimental domination was never absent from my mind. Whenever, therefore, any woman showed a disposition to emulate the ivy, I, in my turn, assumed the rôle of a stern gardener! I remember a lovely Portuguese who began our acquaintance by interesting me, and terminated it by fatiguing me. She thereupon announced, in the spirit of La Vallière, her intention of hiding in a convent.

"Well," I said, "such heroism deserves public recognition.

Tell me the day on which you intend to take the veil, and I will applaud your resolution by giving a ball the same evening!"

My Parliamentary position caused me to be acclaimed in the elections of 1902. My reputation for prodigality, however, gave my opponents the opportunity of reproaching me with an excess of generosity during my electoral campaign. Every pretext was good enough to harm me, and amongst my formidable competitors was Landau, since condemned for treason. These ministerial calumnies succeeded in invalidating my election. The Deputies Turmel and Paul-Menier, of sad repute, voted against the validation of my election, and was it not President Monier who later on pronounced my divorce? Vanquished by such opponents, it can be truthfully said that I have drunk my cup to the dregs.

The Arab says: "Do not revenge thyself. Sit down on the threshold of thy door and thou wilt see the corpse of the enemy pass by." It is a very wise saying, and I have always adhered to its teaching.

I presented myself again before my constituents, and I was elected for the fourth time.

At this period, the Palais Bourdon was a den swarming with weak men who were only vaguely interested in foreign political questions.

On March 25, 1904, I spoke at the Chamber against voting an allowance for President Loubet's journey to Rome, for the sake of having a visit which was addressed to the King alone, and not to the Pope. I certainly had a right to defend a genuinely French thesis at the tribune of the Chamber, and I could not see how a visit to the Pope could in any way prejudice a visit to the King.

In connection with this same speech, in which I forecast the coming war and the dissolution of the Austrian Empire, I received a flattering letter form the Comtesse Jean de Monte-

bello, and from that day I had the privilege of frequenting her *salon*. This lady, beautiful as a statue, with an admirable forehead and marvellous eyebrows, a fine and distinguished profile, a mouth showing dazzlingly white teeth, has a most enchanting smile. She possesses the brains of a statesman, and expresses her views with marvellous clarity; her principles are unalterable, her traditions stainless, and she seems to embody in herself a little of Bossuet and a great deal of Talleyrand. She is essentially feminine, but her brain is essentially masculine, and the Sphinx is not more enigmatic. It is impossible to know her without profiting by her keen intelligence, and, in my own case, I gratefully acknowledge the help which she has untiringly afforded me in certain vexed questions of politics.

The Dreyfus Affair had disastrously affected our military and naval forces, and our Allies did not care to be mixed up in our differences with William II regarding the question of Morocco. Russia had been vanquished at Mukden and at Tsushima, and England alone would perhaps have supported us in case of war. At least, so thought Delcassé.

I had denounced, at the tribune on November 8, 1904, the existence of a secret treaty negotiated between Delcassé and M. Sagasta, determining the spheres of influence of France and Spain in Morocco. I made them understand that this convention was unrealizable without the agreement of England.

But if England did not wish to exercise a protectorate in that country, she nevertheless was not without interest in it herself, and as she also demanded an *entente* with Spain, I drew the following conclusion: "Let us beware that numerous causes of conflicts do not occur to compromise these precious *ententes* which are more necessary than ever at a time when the situation of Europe imposes a vigilant reserve on France."

I was only too right, for the controversy concerning Tangier still lasts.

Tangier and Agadir were the prelude of the recent war, and one trembles at the thought that it could have broken out at the time when our Minister for Foreign Affairs was not expecting it at all.

At that time I received the visit of the Moroccan Minister of War, El-Menebi. He appeared to be intelligent, but he gave one an impression of insecurity. What struck him most in our house was the smallness of the rooms. When he was told that they were the most spacious in Paris, he was astounded. I presented him with a sword the hilt of which was covered with strass, and I am told that this weapon has never left him.

The French are not very affable towards foreigners, but, as may be seen, it takes very little to gain their sympathy, which would not fail to influence our international relations.

My popularity at this time was at its zenith. Here is an amusing proof of this: As I did not always order my carriage to come for me at the Palais Bourbon, I sometimes took a cab. One day I said to the coachman: "40 Avenue du Bois de Boulogne," and he replied: "Oh, yes, to Boni's." I was so amused that I gave him a ten-franc tip.

Another time, when my wife was coming home late in her eight-spring open carriage, I happened to be standing in the avenue beside a policeman who, on seeing her, said to his comrade: "Look at Boni's carriage."

In this familiarity I recognized a reflection of the intimacy which formerly existed at Rochecotte between our family and the country people. Only, the village had become enlarged.

I have always mixed the lighter side of life with its more serious aspect. I cannot divest myself of the habit, and in consequence some of my actions have completely mystified society. For instance, the very same evening that I made a

fiery speech in Parliament, denouncing the actions of Reinach in the Basses-Alpes, I had arranged to appear a few hours later in the disguise of Harlequin at a costume ball given by Madeleine Lemaire.

The next morning the newspapers published a report of my speech side by side with a picture of myself as Harlequin. They left the public to form its own estimation of my character!

However, many curious experiences have fallen to my lot. Like most much discussed men, I have my imitators, and a certain Argentine, Monsieur X, copied me in every possible way. If I wore a red tie on Monday, he sported one on Tuesday, if I drove a phaeton and pair, he immediately followed my example. If I was down to speak in Parliament, he repaired thither to study my voice and gestures. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to be told that he was like me, and his compatriots always hailed him as Boni II. Sem, the inimitable caricaturist, profited by this idiosyncrasy and drew two caricatures of us, which were to all appearances identically the same. These he described as "The True?" and "The False?"

King Constantine, then *Diadoque* of Greece paid his first visit to France at this time, and I gave a gala dinner in his honour. One of the guests was the Marquise de Villa-Urrutia, who later became Ambassadress of Spain in Paris.

Our gardens were discreetly illuminated, and that dinner was especially memorable by reason of the diplomats who were present, and the beauty of the Vicomtesse de Janzé, who looked like a lovely white peacock, and who attracted and interested the Greek Prince in no small degree.

There were a few amiable diplomats in Paris just then. Some of them had traditions, others none at all. Two of them exercised their talents effectively: Cardinal Lorenzelli, the apostolic nuncio, with his coadjutor Monseigneur Montagnini

(for whom Clemenceau always manifested an unaccountable dislike), and Sir Edmond Munson, who did such wonderful work in futherance of the Entente Cordiale.

Most of the others were good men, but their combinations, whether clever or disinterested, did not show any real plan of action, and they misinformed their superiors regarding our real situation. Certain foreigners judge our country according to our Government, and therefore misjudge it.

The Marquis Del Muni, the Spanish Ambassador, was a much discussed man by reason of his transactions with Delcassé on the subject of Morocco, and he was one of the imprudent individuals who evolved the Secret Treaty of 1920 which relegated this question, outwardly at least, to England.

Munir Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador, who reminded me of a stag at bay, was the victim of innumerable attacks in Paris from the "Young Turk" party which he opposed, acting under instructions from this Government. He always gave me the impression of being a man who liked France, but who greatly disliked the regime by which it was governed.

Count and Countess Wolkenstein represented Austria in our midst. The Count was a pleasant man, but his wife, who cared more for music than for diplomacy, had an artistic *flair* for Gabriel Hanotaux, whom she fondly imagined to be the Archangel whose name he bore.

Prince Ourousof, the Russian Ambassador, and the handsome Comte de Sousa-Rousa, who represented Portugal, were essentially men of the world, but the Comte and Comtesse Tornelli, who upheld the dignity of Italy, were more serious-minded, and they never forgave me for my speech on President Loubet's visit to Rome. The diplomatic corps were also frequent guests at our house.

My dinners were most carefully thought out, as I regarded

them as events, and not as burnt offerings. My *chef*, Parrade, was a positive genius, and he was such an economical caterer that he has been able to retire on his perquisites with an income which to-day is as large as my own.

Apropos of our cuisine, I must plead guilty to the womanish fad of insisting upon my kitchens' being as elegant, in their way, as my *salons*. One evening, after dinner, I proposed a tour of inspection through the basement, and my guests, avid for new experiences, followed me *en masse* to the kingdom of M. Parrade. It was an amusing experience, and the washable white-tiled walls and spotless perfection of this subterranean city excited general admiration. A large *pâtisserie*, a revelation in cold storage, and a score of offices were voted wonderful, and as the trained gowns worn by the women swept over the shining marble floors, they produced a sound almost exactly similar to waves breaking gently on the sea-shore.

One evening a "stag" dinner finished up with a visit to the wine cellars. Always thorough in my constructive schemes, I had conceived a wonderful vaulted cellar in which iron bins held quantities of the rarest vintages—each bin embellished, so to speak, with the "pedigree" of its contents. A cut-glass chandelier dispensed the necesary illumination, and we sat round a table and toasted life in a magnum of Mouton Rothschild '69, Château Lafitte '75 and a Jéroboam of Mumm!

At the moment of these Rabelaisian libations, I must confess that I enjoyed the adventure, but I have never repeated the experience.

The same year, I met the Tsar Ferdinand, then Prince of Bulgaria, at Mme. Eugène Schneider's. Later I saw him as King at the Duc de Lyune's at Dampierre, and also at the Duc de Noaille's at Maintenon. He struck me as being intelligent and witty and as possessing both the quality and the faculty

of the Valois. His cunning small eye, somewhat like that of an elephant, gave him the air of the Italian *condotierre.*

He came to France on the advice of his Minister Stanciof, who was favourable to us, and desirous of raising a loan which unfortunately we did not grant. He was therefore obliged to raise it in Berlin, and it has been said that his intention was to give such orders to Le Creusot as would have brought back into our country the money we could have loaned him. But we were governed by people whose interests were opposed to such a proposition, and who foolishly allowed this occasion of consolidating such a friendship to escape.

Although one of his sons belonged to the Orthodox religion, the King of Bulgaria was superstitious and Catholic, but politics require certain necessities which, nevertheless, do not fail to disconcert one's conscience. Leopold was never reconciled to the idea that his descendants would deny St. Louis, and he heard Mass with devotion, holding a kind of missal in his tapering fingers, the nails of which were rose-painted. On these occasions he always seemed to be absorbed in prayer.

As I believed everything was permissible to me, the material question only half preoccupied me and I had spent considerable sums of money, imagining that our resources were limitless, and that she to whom they belonged would allow me to use them as I wished.

However, was it not lucky that, at a time when fortunes are reduced and minds lowered by our democratic regimes, a Frenchman brought the beauties of the past back to life and maintained a tradition worthy of France?

Nobody has replaced me. Perhaps people will say that thanks to this fact there are fewer madmen in the world. The

truth is that men of to-day possess less temperament, less desire and less taste for beauty.

Routine keeps one within the limits of mediocrity. To love luxury and life, one must have a soul overflowing with love, as love carries the imagination away into the regions of extravagance; but love and imagination are rarely met with to-day.

My chief fault lies in conceiving on too great lines and in thinking too much in advance. My enterprises were too much in advance of my time, as I foresaw that which subsequently happened, namely, the increase of the prices of works of art, but as I purchased ten years before everybody else, this action was not intelligible to the public at that time.

My general existence, my châteaux, my palaces, my bibelots, my racehorses, my yachts, my travelling expenses, my political career, my charities, my fêtes, my wife's jewels and loans to my friends represented a total outlay of sixty million francs in twelve years which came out of our income. At that time such a sum was colossal; to-day millions have gone out of fashion, and milliards and trillions have usurped their title.

My wife's pearls were the finest in the world, and the Royal Braganza diamonds were reset by Cartier as a copy of the Collier of Marie Antoinette. Anna's collection of diamonds was unsurpassed. Her rings were perfect examples of the art of the great jewellers allied to the splendour of flawless stones, and I always admired the emerald wings which she occasionally wore in her dark hair. I bought her some of the finest jewels of the Renaissance, and some unique examples of Indian work, as I venerate the spirit of those old-time craftsmen who worked primarily from a love of the beautiful. Any lapidary can cut a precious stone, but it requires an artist to set it.

The Parisians were not at all grateful to me for my gen-

erosities, and, prompted by envy, they usually reproached me with that by which they had all benefited.

Nevertheless, incredible though it may appear, my head was not turned by this torrent of gold which flowed through my hands and when it suddenly ceased, the loss of it scarcely troubled me at all!

CHAPTER XVI

MR. WALDECK-ROUSSEAU, the celebrated French premier, said at the time of the discussion of the law against the religious associations: "For centuries, two doctrines have been struggling for the mastery of the world: the one which gives the supremacy in the State to the religious power, and that which accords it to the civil power."

This sentence represents civil war as inevitable at all times and in every country, but the true doctrine denies the supremacy of either power over the other and establishes the just balance between the two.

"Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and to God the things which be God's." This divine law has, from the very origin of Christianity, established the necessary discrimination whereby all the ancient societies gave to each of these two powers its due.

The French monarchy showed, in this instance as in so many others, a just sense of political truth. François I in 1516 determined the relations of the King with the Pope by a *Concordat*, which defines the distinction between the two powers —that of the Pope, spiritual and universal, and that of the French King, civil and national.

The Revolution, after having destroyed this equilibrium by the civil constitution of the clergy, restored it by the new *Concordat* of 1801, which once more distinguished the two powers, and this distinction was observed for a century. If it has been suppressed to-day, this means a return to the theocratic governments of antiquity, and a new attempt to bind the indi-

vidual body and soul in the bonds of the omnipotent State.

Louis XIV, Napoleon and Prince Bismarck shared this error, but they forswore it as soon as they had perceived its fatal consequences. But modern French statesmen fail to realize that in politics these questions are very ancient ones, and that the methods of settling them are always the same.

"Ignorant people, when they are in power, do incalculable harm because they believe that history begins with them." The Prince of Talleyrand who said this was a statesman of infinite wisdom.

The venerable Cardinal Richard, a very pacific individual, followed Denys Cochin blindly at the time of his expulsion from the Archbishopric of Paris. He was succeeded by Archbishop Amette, whose hesitations, reserve and prudence caused him to be indulgent towards those who were not his friends. For instance, he greatly esteemed M. Poincaré, although the latter never changed his views—witness his reply to Charles Benoit: "Between us there is the barrier of the religious question."

The ex-president of the French Republic is a clever jurist, on occasions a veritable spitfire, a Voltairian, and a being endowed with bulldog determination. He possesses the gift of facile oratory, and his very failings, which in the natural order of things ought to have destroyed his political career, only served to consolidate it. Thus he is best described as a paradoxical president, since most of his actions are paradoxical. For example, though an ardent upholder of the separation of Church and State, he nevertheless contrived to make himself popular with the Catholics. Another instance of this curious trait occurred when he voted in favour of two years' military service and abandoned M. Millerand, the Minister of War, in order to obtain the radical vote at the Congress of Versailles. Yet, in the face of these things, he achieved a super miracle,

and carried the vote of the military party! A tax on the revenues was also part of his program, and, incredible though it may appear, the great financiers, oblivious of their interests, favoured his nomination.

These anomalies happen only in France. But as M. Poincaré belongs to a later period than my recollections, which deal only with pre-war France, I shall not attempt to discuss him or his more recent policy in these pages.

Untouched by party passion, Paul Deschanel, as President of the Chamber, alone thought rightly. In his discourse at the Academy he spoke with remarkable foresight about Austria and on all other occasions he showed the qualities of a statesman. But Fate was unkind to him, inasmuch as his bad health rendered it impossible for him to devote his life-energies to the State. Deschanel loved to illustrate his Parliamentary speeches with what he considered appropriate gestures, and one day, in Comtesse de Montebello's *salon* he discoursed at great length and vehemence. His outspoken hostess at once found fault with his rather theatrical methods. "Remember where you are," she said. "Do you take me for the Parliament?" Deschanel's eloquence, however, was really fine, and he invariably preserved an open mind on every subject.

Unlike most men of talent, Deschanel was a dandy, and he never thought himself sufficiently well turned out. One day, during a heated discussion in the Chamber, he beckoned me to come to the President's chair, but when I went over to him (thinking that he wished to make some observation on the discussion then in progress), I was greeted in this surprising manner: "I've just remembered that I have neither a hatter nor a tailor at the moment," said Deschanel. "Will you be obliging enough to give me the names of those you go to?" As I was a trifle vexed at being disturbed on such a frivolous pretext, I decided not to enlighten this Parisian Brummell.

"There is someone over there who is streets ahead of me in the 'Who's Who' of the best tailors," I answered. "Shall I tell the Comte de Gontaut-Beron that you would like to speak to him?"

I often met Paul Deschanel in society, not only at my father's and my own houses, but also at the Comtesse Potocka's. The Comtesse represents a unique type, combining wonderful wit and brusque and incisive methods with Neapolitan gaiety of heart. A daughter of the Duchesse de Régina, and Princesse Pignatelli in her own right, the Comtesse is a rarely beautiful woman, with cameo-like features and a skin like velvet. She simply devours amusing stories, especially if they happen to be to the detriment of men, to whom she professes herself indifferent. She also cares little for women, but she considers no sacrifice too great to make for her dogs.

She spends her fortune royally, but she is a creature of paradoxes; she ignores public or private criticism and she pursues her own line of conduct, indifferent to the comment which it often excites. She is cruel, almost to brutality, to those who are unfortunate enough to fall in love with her. Rank and adulation do not affect her—she has been accustomed to both from her birth; the picturesque and amusing side of life alone appeal to her.

This charming person has always shown me the greatest kindness. She often invites me to talk to her in her own home, and sometimes to applaud her skill as a pianiste at fashionable concerts.

Having adopted France as her country, the Comtesse Potocka takes the greatest interest in politics, and many well-known politicians allow themselves to be scolded and bullied by her in order to enjoy thoroughly her witty repartee.

The Comtesse is separated from her husband, and one day Deschanel, who was discussing the best method of heating a

room, found fault with the "Choubersky" stove in her *salon*. "For shame, monsieur!" cried the Comtesse. "Do you wish to separate me from the only thing which now reminds me of Poland?" On another occasion the Russian Ambassador, Prince Ourousoff, excused himself for not having sent the Comtesse an invitation to one of his receptions, on the plea that it was necessary to ask her husband for reasons of diplomacy.

"I knew that you would not care to meet him," concluded the Ambassador.

"You are entirely wrong," retorted the Comtesse. "It would not have affected either of us in the least; we often see each other at funerals!"

Long before the World War brought about the disruption of Europe, I never attempted to disguise my horror at the idea of a *rapprochement* between France and Germany, and on June 2, 1901, I published a diatribe in the *Echo de Paris*, under the title of "What I Really Think," on the subject of the relations between France and our neighbour across the Rhine.

Waldeck-Rousseau, always tainted with pro-Germanism, was favourable to a *rapprochement* between France and Germany, and he inclined his ear favourably towards everything and everybody emanating from Berlin.

The day after the general election (whereby he fell from power), Waldeck-Rousseau embarked on the *Ariana* for Norway, in order to meet the Kaiser, who was cruising in Norwegian waters, with the deliberate intention of making advances to our hereditary enemy.

I could not conceal my shame at the possibility of such a thing, and on April 20, 1902, I contributed an article to the *Gaulois*, entitled "The National Principle as Opposed to a German Alliance," in which, whilst condemning such an alliance, I strongly advocated one between France and England. Count Kevenhuller, then Austrian Ambassador in Paris, a most cour-

teous and distinguished man, who possessed no real gift of foresight, remarked to me apropos of the opinion which I then promulgated: "I read your article this morning, but you don't seem to understand that a *rapprochement* between France, England and Russia would mean a union of fire and water. I cannot even pretend to see your reasoning."

But it would have been absolutely in the interests of Austria if the Count had realized the wisdom of my words. He was, as I have said, a charming individual, but lacking in humour. It so happened that he once asked my wife and myself to dine with him on a particular evening in May, but as we were previously engaged, we were obliged to refuse his invitation. A few days later, when we were still at the beginning of the month, the Count, who, like myself, was a guest at the Comtesse de Pourtalès', was describing with evident pride the way in which he arranged his official receptions.

"I divide my guests into two series," he announced blandly, "those who amuse me, and those who bore me; for example, on the 18th of May I shall enjoy the society of the former, and on the 25th of May I shall suffer in silence the company of the bores."

I accepted the compliment for what it was worth. You see, *I had been asked to dine with the Count on the 25th;* but at least I had the consolation of knowing exactly what he thought of me, which, after all, is always something.

In the early part of 1903 the Duc and Duchesse de Rohan invited me to Josselin to meet the young Archduke Charles, who was staying with them for a few days. The late Ex-Emperor of Austria, then a youth of sixteen, arrived at Josselin with an aide-de-camp and several personal servants, and the Duke and Duchess received him with all the honours due to his rank.

The Archduke was frail-looking, with delicate features, and

bore an imprint of the fatality inseparable from the house of Habsburg: he was as charming as are all Austrians of noble birth.

The château, which is situated near Avranches, is one of the finest in Brittany, and I remember that we dined there under unusually romantic conditions. The dining-room is on the ground-floor, and during dinner the great windows were left open, in order that the country people might defile past and see the future Emperor of Austria at table. It was absolutely *à la mode de Versailles* where the King dined in public, and as a picturesque throw-back to those glittering days it made an especial appeal to my imagination.

On the Sunday following, we attended Mass in the village church, where the Prince was received as the heir to the throne of Austria, and the *Suisses* walked in front of him, halberds in hands, from the church to the *prie-Dieu* reserved for him.

I met the Archduke twenty years later in Switzerland. He was then an Emperor in exile and on the point of launching himself into imperial adventures which caused his death.

But in recalling the vanished glories of Austria, I have strayed from my political past, for which I must crave the indulgence of the reader.

Mr. Balfour, who understood the importance of an Anglo-French *rapprochement*, first opened negotiations with France, and the visit of King Edward VII to Paris in 1903 may be said to have laid the foundation of the Entente Cordiale which materialized on April 8, 1904.

The genius of the English King is more apparent to-day than it was at the time of the Entente. For some inexplicable reason, he was greeted with coldness, which his foresight alone prevented him from resenting. As he was able to estimate the future aright, he ignored the veiled hostility, knowing full well that it would inevitably disappear.

Lord Hardinge was in attendance on His Majesty, and we owe him an eternal debt of gratitude for the result of the good work which he undertook in a really noble spirit of devotion, applying in our favour the best traditions of English poise in the face of an undue development of hegemony.

I invited several friends to see the entry of the King of England into the capital. A display of interlaced trophies, blended with the flags of the two countries, decorated the balustrade surrounding my palace and lent a touch of colour to the scene, whilst my heart sang for joy as I realized what the Entente must ultimately signify to France. However, notwithstanding my pleasure, I could not help remembering the words of Talleyrand:

"A union between England and France should be as intimate as that of a horse and his rider—but one must never be the horse."

My political friends would not take the trouble to understand that we ought not to be entirely swayed by sentiment, and one of them, Léon Daudet, insisted that an alliance with England must of necessity terminate the Franco-Russian alliance. I, however, had drawn my own conclusions from the prophetic works of the Comte de Oaudordy, who was gifted with a complete understanding on the subject, and who had wished to terminate the latent antagonism between England and Russia by making France the mediator between the two nations. I also tried to prove that the English alliance, supported by the Russian, conformed with our tradition.

"Our hostility to Russia and our Entente with Great Britain alone landed us in the fatal Crimean War, by which we played into the hands of Prussia," I said. And I reminded my hecklers that if we had accepted the advice given in 1866 by Prince Gortchakoff, who then proposed to Monsieur Drouin de Luyn and Lord Clarendon an alliance between England, France and

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Russia, the might of Bismarck would have been shattered, and the balance of European power saved. But as no one estimated in time the value of that proposal, we had to learn the bitter lesson of Sadowa, and to experience the final humiliation of 1870.

On October 10, 1904 (during the Russo-Japanese War), the Russian fleet commanded by Admiral Rodjestvensky sank in the North Sea several English fishing-boats belonging to Hull, believing them to represent part of the aggressive tactics of a Japanese submarine.

The intervention of France alone saved the situation, and on February 7, 1905, I signed an article in the *Figaro* under the heading "France and the Hull Conference." And, again, when the battle of Mukden terminated the first part of the Russo-Japanese War, the same newspaper published "France and the Peace Question," in which I suggested that we should take the first initiative towards peace.

A very well-known Japanese, Baron Suymatzu, in his interesting book, "The Rising Sun," does not hesitate to blame Germany for the war in the Far East, but I am afraid that I remember the Baron more by his methods of melon-eating than by reason of his political opinions. One evening at my house *he ate an entire melon, rind and all, and managed to survive the adventure.*

But the Japanese must possess silver-plated stomachs akin to the historic interior of General Galliffet, as they seem able to digest all sorts and conditions of food, impossible for Europeans. This I once found out for myself, when dining at the Japanese Legation as the guest of Baron Motono. The other *invités,* Comte and Comtesse Jean de Montebello, M. Jules Delafosse and Prince and Princesse Pierre de Chimay, expressed themselves charmed at the prospect of a Japanese menu, and went into raptures at the sight of the little black lacquer plates

and the porcelain cups and saucers containing some odoriferous compound: swallows' nests, sugared eggs, minced fish and other uneatable things were neither satisfying nor inspiring, and my mouth watered as I thought of a tender *filet* or a chicken done to a turn. My friends likewise shared my longing for a square meal, so, after leaving the Legation, we repaired hotfoot to a restaurant celebrated for its cuisine, and made up at supper what we had found lacking in a Japanese dinner!

Clemenceau, I am glad to say, set the seal of his approval on many of my political opinions, notably on the question of an Anglo-French Alliance. This brusque and impulsive individual has represented the unassailable stumbling-block of successive ministries during the last thirty years. His articles, *Le Guêpier Marocain*, which led us to suppose that, once in power, he would oppose any African expedition, proved futile, as the day after he became Minister he instigated the disembarkation of the French troops at Casablanca! This lack of consistency arose, however, from his peculiar mentality, and it can only be judged accordingly.

"The Tiger" knows antiquity pretty well and has some knowledge of history since the Revolution of July, but he voluntarily leaves out all that has happened between the year 1 of our era and 1830, which is rather serious from a French point of view.

Clemenceau has played dissolvent rôles in connexion with questions of religion, in the Dreyfus Affair and at the time of the Armistice. But his political life is dominated by two right motives—the first, that an *entente* with England is necessary, the second, that a country which does not possess a powerful fleet must not waste its strength in new colonies *whilst the enemy is still at her doors.*

Caillaux, whose bald cranium looks exactly like a mauve

Easter egg when he is angry, often accused me of Anglomania, but he was, notwithstanding his faults, more exact and intelligent than any of his colleagues. Let me name, however, one exception—Barthou. Courteous, subtle, and supple as a suède glove, the latter always made one wonder how to treat him. He is admirably supported by his wife, a clever woman—the intimate friend of the late Pierre Loti—who manages her husband with the charm and tact which makes her the guardian spirit of their home.

Aristide Briand possesses a great facility of assimilation, and, comparing him to Poincaré, Clemenceau would have said: "Briand knows nothing but understands everything, whereas Poincaré knows everything and understands nothing."

As for that old white mouse of a Freycinet, one can only praise his prudence and remember that he is one of those who have rendered the greatest services to France.

Among my former colleagues, François de Pressensé possessed the most remarkable intelligence allied to a singularly unprepossessing exterior. He edited the *Temps* for a considerable period, and his interventions at the Tribune (even when they were opposed to my views) were always worthy of my attention. But the majority of politicians led small smothered lives in their uninteresting grooves.

Jaurès, who was very witty, noticed this more than once. One day he described M. Ribot, the old long-haired liberal orator, in these words: "One may say of you what Phocion said of the cypress: He is tall, he is dead and he bears no fruit."

CHAPTER XVII

In 1903 I again visited the United States. My wife had preceded me thither with my two eldest sons, as my Parliamentary duties detained me in Paris. I left Cherbourg on January 13 on a French boat, in company with M. Taigny, who was going to take up his position with M. Jules Cambon, then Ambassador at Washington.

The weather was abominable, and as there were very few passengers, the captain very kindly invited me to take my meals at his table whenever my health permitted my doing so, which was not often!

Before dinner we used to go to the bar and drink cocktails in order to get in touch with American life.

I felt very apprehensive when I realized that Mme. de Castellane was alone in the New World, as I feared the influence of her brothers after the discussions which we had had regarding questions of finance. Nevertheless, I pretended to be gay and during the whole of the voyage I passed most of my time in actually *singing*.

One day before we landed, boats came to meet us laden with a cargo of journalists, who were desirous of sampling the travellers and learning their reasons for coming to America. One and all tried to obtain an interview with me, and their voices reminded me of the noise peculiar to bookies on the racecourse. They took my cabin by storm, as if my voyage were something sensational, and at first I refused to be drawn. M. Taigny, however, advised me to be more kindly disposed.

"For," said he, "one must not put those people against one, and if you are not amenable they will not cease from blackguarding you later." So I took his advice and consented to talk with those savages—for savages they were in reality!

First of all, they questioned me as to my relations with my wife (as if that were any business of theirs!), and why she had come to America before me; next they asked me why my children had accompanied her. These men probably knew that a storm was brewing in my household and were interested in it. Their curiosity was nauseating, and it bore the stamp of the inquisitive, destroying and arrogant attitude which the American press invariably displays towards a defenceless man, whom it has decided beforehand to defame. So what I had apprehended actually occurred, and notwithstanding M. Taigny's advice I lived for one whole month in New York under a shower of ridiculous and fantastic articles which effectually poisoned my stay. However, I realized that the New World had been unceasingly interested in me ever since my marriage, and was persuaded that I had no reason to complain of the tremendous boom of which I was the object.

But directly I arrived in the port, I forgot the aborigines in admiration of one of the most magnificent spectacles in the world, as gigantic fifty-floor houses rose insolently to the clouds, and I thought that if the inhabitants had so wished, they would easily have erected a modern Tower of Babel.

A pretty large crowd had come to the landing-stage on hearing I was about to land. What did they expect to see? What was the reason for this unwholesome curiosity? I decided that probably a nobleman represented a kind of curious animal to these people, and doubtless the stories that had been told about me and had found a sensational echo in their papers had overexcited their feeble imaginations.

Most of them stared fixedly and silently at me. Some

nudged each other. "There he is! There he is!" they whispered, and although I felt bored, at the same time I was afraid of such ridiculous notoriety; but when once I had left the steamer, all those caricatures of humanity melted away just as if they had been witnessing a funeral or a wedding.

To my surprise, neither my wife nor my children met me. I called a cab and drove to the hotel, a lonely and disappointed man, and my feelings may well be imagined when I say Madame de Castellane seated at a table in the dining-room with my sons and their nurse. This cold attitude should have aroused my worst suspicions, but I put it down to the ill humour to which I had now become accustomed and I therefore paid no further attention to it.

Mme. de Castellane's first greeting to me was typical of her outlook. "Oh, how I regret not being able to live in my own country, now that I have married a foreigner!" she lamented.

I went up to my room after this charming reception, and I spent the evening beside my fire. I thought of my youngest boy, who had stayed in Europe with my mother, and I regretted having left him behind me.

M. Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, who was one of my first visitors, congratulated me upon the steps I intended taking with regard to some politicians.

But notwithstanding his kindness and M. Taigny's charming visits, I was the victim of an indescribable sadness. My thoughts reverted to the time of my marriage when the future opened up before me full of hope, and I grieved to think how vain my efforts had been. Apparently, I had not known how to impart happiness, and the knowledge was decidedly unpalatable.

At Delmonico's where we lunched, we sat in the midst of tables dominated by befeathered ladies (it was the fashion at that time to wear large hats) who were metaphorically devour-

ing one another while they ate. The favoured beings who, immersed in business, provide the luxuries for these ladies, usually take their meals in Wall Street!

Directly they saw us, nearly everyone rose and stood on their chairs in order to stare more easily at us. I have never seen anything more naïve.

Pretending not to notice this display of curiosity, we ordered our lunch and asked for the fashionable dishes, that is to say, terrapin, a kind of hashed tortoise with cream, clam-broth and the small oysters peculiar to the New World.

Mme. de Castellane, whom such things reminded of her childhood, now felt and looked happier, whereas I bitterly regretted our good French cooking, and—incidentally—our courtesy. Enthusiastic and appreciative, my wife now wanted to taste a blood-duck which I particularly disliked, but there was opposition between us on nearly all subjects, whether trivial or serious!

Having no special object in view, we went for a drive after lunch together, but New York did not look as it had done at the time of my marriage, many lots of ground near the river which had then still been unbuilt on, being now covered with houses. We crossed the city, which, built between two water-currents, has not been able to expand as it should have done, and has therefore found its development in the height of its buildings, where human layers live one on top of the other, more or less like gigantic chests of drawers.

The colossal number of floors has developed the taste for "elevators," which permit the people to get out of a car and to find themselves at the stop nearest their flats. The aspect of the streets is abominable.

Here and there roof gardens are cultivated at a terrific height, and New York is as the poles apart from the harmonious lines of Washington, which is constructed on a French

eighteenth-century plan, forming one of the most beautiful ensembles known, and giving a reasonable and peaceful aspect to the city.

In a New York winter, the cold strikes down into the too narrow streets, whereas in summer the air flows into them as if from a heating-apparatus. This fearful climate forces the inhabitants to leave their city at least once a week in order to get a breath of air. Therefore all Americans go in for golf, tennis or riding; and in their spare time they drink, even now, quantities of stimulants. One Sunday, when I went into a bar, all the tables were occupied by men with vacant eyes who were uttering incoherent words and sipping alcohol.

I did not know many people in New York, but I sometimes saw Senator Chauncey Depew, who, whilst he took a great deal of exercise, devoted himself to learned dissertations somewhat in the manner of Emile Olivier.

Tall and thin, with protruding cheekbones, grey hair, a kind expression and a rapidity of elocution which bordered upon loquacity, he represented the honest professional politician, having sufficient means to live independently and indulge in sentimental ideas upon everything.

He was a type opposed to the regular American politician, who is generally a healthy, rather common man possessing no distinction, but whose physic has nothing in common with our ugly little bourgeois Deputies, who, more or less lawyers, and more or less honest, are mainly noticeable for their short legs and fat stomachs.

One evening Mrs. Gerry (a Livingstone by birth), wife of the commodore of that name, gave a dinner in our honour.

Several ambassadors who were passing through New York at the time were likewise invited, and imagine my surprise at being taken in to dinner by the mistress of the house, and given precedence, but as my wife and myself were the lions

of the soirée, I suppose we were given all the honours! After dinner, I felt it incumbent on me to apologize to the diplomats, who, however, were not at all surprised at what had occurred. They were perfectly acquainted with the customs of the country.

The table was wonderfully decorated with silver-gilt plate, and the meal fortunately had been prepared by a French *chef*.

The couples left the tables in the French fashion, namely, arm-in-arm, and contrary to the American habit, for in New York the English customs are generally observed, and the gentlemen remain at table to drink claret or port after the departure of the ladies.

Mrs. Gerry received very gracefully, and her daughter Mabel, already a finished woman of the world, was greatly appreciated in society.

The Commodore had an estate in the country, where he shot partridges in a curious manner, which, unlike our birds, perched on the trees and the roofs. These American partridges were never shot on the wing. What a contrast to the methods of Europe!

At Washington, where we went for two days, we were present at other sumptuous entertainments, and one in particular, given by Lady Herbert, whose husband was the English Ambassador, brought us once more into a European atmosphere. The next day we lunched with Count Kanitz, the German Ambassador, who married Mlle. de Hatzfield, my father's first cousin.

After making a short stay in the capital, we returned to New York, where a great many charming and hospitable friends welcomed us and recommenced the honours of the city.

I attended the hunts and followed the "drags," and one day I went to the meet with Mme. Ladenburg, a little dark woman

with an innocent air, who always looked tired, although she possessed an iron energy comparable with none.

Our horses, lent us by Pat Collier, were waiting for us at the station. They were splendid and well-fed animals, but they were rather badly groomed, with almost unpolished bridles and pretty hard saddles. We lost no time in mounting and trotted up to the side of the plain, where, in a side-way behind, a few hounds were to take up the scent. Bordering it was a barrier of about one metre, which Mme. Ladenburg tackled courageously when the first sound of the horn announced the start of the hunt.

Her mount, a very big and powerful beast, pulled hard, and her small wrists could hardly hold him in. Firmly seated on her horse, and fastened, as it were, to her saddle, she did not seem to be even aware of the size of the jump-fence and arrived at the other side her serene elegance undisturbed. Even the gardenia she wore in her buttonhole had not moved! She was still smiling.

Mlle. Gritta Pomeroy, showed no less courage and sent her horse at the stone wall fearlessly.

A certain Mme. X was accompanied by a so-called secretary, a handsome man, who galloped in front of her under pretext of giving her a lead. It was difficult for anyone to keep up with them. One day, after the hunt, I called on Mme. X, and although she opened at my knock, she probably feared that I should be too enterprising, for she promptly set a Great Dane on me! The furious brute wanted to devour me on the spot, but fortunately only tore my clothes. This was the lady's curious way of protecting herself against liberties which she presumed would take place, but which in reality nobody ever dreamt of taking!

Coming back from the country by train, I noticed a big crowd on the platform, at one of the stations on Long Island.

On asking an explanation, I was informed, to my great surprise, that the papers had announced that I should be passing in the morning, and the whole district had turned out in order to see me!

Courtesy would have prompted me to bow to those inquisitive and naïve people, but I refrained from doing so, knowing that it was impossible for them to appreciate any sign of politeness.

In New York, I often saw Sir Roderick Cameron and his daughter Kitty, who became one of my confidential and best friends. Sir Roderick, an old man with white whiskers, was a Canadian, and bore a title in his capacity as an English subject. He dwelt in Madison Avenue, and always showed me many kindnesses.

At his house one met a great many different people—among others, Creighton Webb, who was one of the best-known figures in New York, and Dick Peters, who managed to solve the problem of remaining everyone's friend by telling them nothing but the truth about themselves.

I also attended the receptions of Mme. Belmont, whose first husband was Mr. Vanderbilt, and those of Mme. Perry Belmont, her sister-in-law, who after her trip to France became one of the most appreciated women in Paris. Finally, I visited James Hyde, who twice a week went from New York to the George Goulds' at Lakewood. At that time neither Mme. de Castellane nor I was in his good graces, and on one occasion, after having offered us a place on his coach, he suddenly put us off, saying that the expedition had been cancelled. Afterwards, however, he decided to make it without us. My wife was much vexed at this unceremonious treatment, which she believed was intended to slight her, and in consequence she made a very caustic remark to Hyde at dinner.

James Hyde had recently obtained the Legion of Honour,

and when he began to boast of having received this decoration, Mme. de Castellane said, in accents that carried far: "In France *everybody* gets it, even *dressmakers.*"

George Gould's house had been completely transformed since my last trip to America, as Lowengard and Kroener, the well-known antiquaries, had installed some valuable *objets d'art*—among others, a suite upholstered in Casanova tapestry, which I had formerly known at Valençay.

My host displayed this furniture with tremendous pride, but his disappointment was great when I informed him of its origin, and that I had jumped on the priceless coverings in my childhood!

The house from which I had been married nine years ago had been likewise metamorphosed, and there was, so to speak, no trace left of the modern drawing-room in which I had received the nuptial blessing.

Mr. Gould, who appropriated the ideas of others, even whilst criticizing them, had in his turn been bitten by the passion for knick-knacks, and had now begun to form collections. He could now, he pointedly remarked to me, surround himself with things as beautiful as my own. "Yes," I replied, "but you will never know how to put them in their proper place."

Pierpont Morgan, about whom the most incredible articles are written in Europe, was at that time busy organizing the Ocean Trust, and when I expressed myself enthusiastically regarding the gigantic side of this conception, he answered: "It is the trend of things which carries me where I am going. We are the result of our enterprises, not their promoters. The trend of my evolution urges me to create anew daily, whether I will or no."

I visited the great financier's mansion one morning. It was an ugly abode, although it contained some very beautiful things, notably the two famous Boucher tapestries which I had

acquired immediately after my marriage, and which I had resold in a moment of financial depression.

The Bouchers were badly hung and inserted in panels which were too narrow to frame them properly. The edges were hidden by furniture placed against them, and I could see at a glance that many of the bibelots on the tables and consoles were not genuine antiques.

On entering, I was particularly struck by a pervasive smell of cooking which pervaded everything, and in the dining-room I noticed a table covered with a crumpled coffee-stained and crumb-strewn table-cloth, on which some half-empty cups were still standing.

There was not much difference between the life of the millionaire master of the house and that of a man without a fortune.

A glass door which divided the two rooms was covered with a lace curtain in the worst taste possible, and a pair of turquoise-blue Sèvres vases which were palpably imitations ornamented the consoles. A few flowers and plants were distributed here and there.

Mr. Morgan hardly spoke to me, and withdrew, leaving me stupefied at his conception of the interior arrangement of a home.

Small wonder that I felt out of place in this *milieu* where people did not even speak the same language as myself.

This visit left both my wife and me thoughtful. Mme. de Castellane feared that the sight of works of art might inflame my ever-present longing for more, and she herself wanted only to get away as quickly as possible to her sister's house, where "collecting" was not the order of the day. Helen Gould still remained in her own circle, always interested in the same things and persuaded of her own infallibility: philanthropic or religious works alone preoccupied her.

In her drawing-room we found the same bead curtains, the same furniture and pictures, the same tumour-like lamp-shade as long ago. I found, too, the very same dining-room, and the same detestation of wine. In that home there was nothing to excite the temptation to acquire beautiful things. Everything would have had to be entirely changed for such a miracle to happen.

Miss Helen Gould showed me a slight sympathy mixed with a certain reserve, but was particularly amiable towards my children. I knew that at the bottom of her heart she had not learnt or wished to like me since my marriage.

Her anti-alcoholic prejudices were, however, not without excuse, as Helen came in contact with a great many business men whose habits, as regards drink, were lamentable, as I saw for myself when I was obliged to consult one of her lawyers about the settlement of a personal matter. In France a man in a similar position would perhaps have placed a bunch of flowers on his desk, but here one saw a bottle of whisky and a soda-water siphon beside the lawyer's important papers. As I was greatly struck by this, I could not help remarking: "My sister-in-law does not permit alcohol to be taken, even at meals."

"The success of *my* business," said the lawyer, "entirely depends upon the quantity of alcohol which I absorb. In fact I need constant stimulants to keep me going." So saying, he emptied a large glass of whisky and soda, at a single gulp, and this resulted in a violent fit of hiccuping which rendered him disgusting. However, his reputation did not seem to suffer from his libations. Like many of his compatriots, he had, it must be admitted, a simplicity of manner that touched a sympathetic chord. He did not act as a parvenu, and he was not ashamed of his origin. Having become rich late in life,

he had developed a passion for art, and had acquired some beautiful pictures by modern masters which he placed near authentic drawings of Rembrandt and Van Dyck.

Among these modern works I noticed an excessively large picture, representing a young cook in his white cap and jacket, with a basket on his head.

As we stood in front of this real-life study, the lawyer, who plainly expected me to admire this painting, said proudly: "This portrait might be my own at the beginning of my life."

If this remark was intended to be witty, the idea of placing the picture beside old masterpieces showed a lamentable want of taste, and a somewhat anarchistic mentality.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the peculiarities caused by this absence of intellectual maturity, some Americans are beginning to show a real, practical and studied political common sense.

On March 31, 1903, James Hyde, Mr. Gould, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Vanderbilt were together in Wall Street in an overcrowded bar frequented by business men. They were discussing the events of the day, and they were all of the opinion that the first war which would rope in the United States would be one against Germany!

So if the mentality of these people seems strange and different to us, it is likewise compatible with a just and simple vision resulting from their primitiveness.

If you were to tell an American that he was not a nationalist, he would kill you. It is only in France that to be called a patriot appears to be regarded as an insult.

After a month and a half's stay in America, I returned to Europe with my wife and children, and as I watched the flying fish circling round the ship, I felt happier and more secure because my sons were with me. How well I remember that

day, and how clearly I still see my boys in their ermine cloaks, spotted with little black tails, as they chased each other along the deck! At that moment I thought only of their future, whereas my wife was occupied in thinking of her own.

CHAPTER XVIII

We left for the East on our yacht on August 9, 1903. Our departure at Marseilles was disturbed by the *églantinards* who, supported by the police, acclaimed the Ministers Combes and Pelletan, who were passing through that town.

In the preceding month of January, on our return from America, where we had spent six weeks, the French flag had been insulted at Havre. Evidently some evil spirit dominated everything!

In such tense moments one feels the need for reflection. We arrived at Notre Dame de la Garde on Sunday at the hour of Vespers, and the church doors were open on to the city and the sea. Thus the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament spread over space, whilst the clamours of the revolutionaries resounded in the distance.

Just as we were leaving Marseilles, we were assailed with threatening anonymous letters, but I paid no great attention to them. Mme. de Castellane, however, was greatly perturbed, although I told her that these missives probably emanated from some of the manifestants.

These filthy letters used to wind up with unprintable abuse, and naturally I tried to discover their author. I decided to mention them to a woman who was at Marseilles and whom I suspected of having written them. After a stormy scene in which denials alternated with oaths, I knew that I was not mistaken. In any case, after our interview, this kind of correspondence stopped.

We were accompanied on our yacht by the Comte de Luber-

sac and Comte Louis de Gontaut Biron. Our first port of call was Ajaccio, where we found that Napoleon had been succeeded by *L'Aiglon*—otherwise Sarah Bernhardt, as there was very little Napoleon and a great deal of Sarah!

Disillusioned by Corsica, we went to Sicily, where against a sky of burning blue the breath of Etna arose in a column of smoke and fire. The land itself was as dry and nervous as a fever-stricken man, but at times the sweet and wholesome winds from the sea lifted the curtain of brooding heat, and rediscovered the beauty of the island.

The yacht called at Crete. That enchanting island, with its ancient monuments and its olive-hued population, was then governed by Prince George of Greece, under the protection of the great powers; but the name of Venizelos had already begun to be heard!

Canea detained us for a few days, as did also Candia, that interesting city, with its Venetian harbour and its fountains bearing the arms of some of the Doges. There was only one carriage, which we hired, thereby appearing as sovereigns in the eyes of the natives. We drove to the ancient palace of King Minos, the white and pink marbles of which still enclose vases and mosaics, inscriptions in unknown tongues, statuettes in terra-cotta, theatres, staircases and other wonderful things.

Fresh excavations have unearthed tiny figures representing women dressed in the fashions of to-day! Their *décolletée* alone differs slightly. The breast is entirely naked, whereas with us it occasionally remains hidden. Here, too, the wonderful frescoes remind one that the ancients were familiar with bullfights before the Spaniards indulged in them.

Crete and Candia passed like living pictures of antiquity before our eyes, and at last we arrived at Constantinople, that city of dreams, romance and Turkish delight! But here again I was disenchanted! The colour of Constantinople

appealed to me certainly, and its white-capped mosques looked like little cloud-drifts on the vivid horizon, but directly one set foot in its streets, the city took upon itself the similitude of a big, evil-smelling bazaar. The former Christian churches, now mosques, had been so mutilated by the Turks that, even at close quarters, they looked more like so many lime-kilns each flanked by four tall chimneys. A city of unsavoury surprises, Constantinople afforded me little or no enjoyment.

I looked for fine Oriental types—they were non-existent! So much, I thought ruefully, for one's preconceived notions of the poetic glamour of the Golden Horn.

Madame Edouard André was staying at Thérapia, and we dined with her one night at the English embassy. Mme. André had curious foible,—she was, apparently, unable to wear a petticoat successfully. As she stood talking to the English Ambassador, I suddenly noticed that a white lace flounce was rapidly descending from the heights to *terra firma*, and in a few moments Mme. André's petticoat encompassed her like the foam round the feet of Venus! I had already witnessed a similar occurrence in Paris, but I certainly had not expected a repetition of it when next we met!

Mme. André had a pretty wit, and when an indiscreet friend once asked her how old she was, she replied that she had not the faintest idea.

"But," persisted the tactless questioner, "you *must* know your age."

"Oh, my dear, how can I possibly remember a thing which changes whenever I try to remember it?" answered the ageless one.

At Constantinople we were invited to the Selamlik, but Abdul Hamid seldom left his palace, where ten thousand men were constantly on guard. He courteously sent word to the French Ambassador that he would receive us on the following Friday.

After having visited several venders of carpets, we walked down the streets which are usually so admired, and which I could not admire.

Constans, our Ambassador, was then exercising the function of nunciate by virtue of agreements dating from François I, Léon X and Soliman. It was a strange sight to see this official of the Republic kissing the Gospel on Sunday at Mass and addressing himself to the Christians in the name of the Pope!

The Sultan placed a dragoman and boats at our disposal in order that we might visit his so-called treasures and palaces, but I only saw ugly plaster buildings reminiscent of those met with at universal exhibitions and which were, like them, devoted to commonplace things.

Until now, my impressions of Constantinople had centred mainly around Rose-Jam, ill-smelling streets and occasional glimpses of women who looked exactly like bonbons protected from flies under coverings of muslin, tulle and lace. However, the green mosque of Brousse, immortalized by Pierre Loti, compensated for much that nauseated me, although I must confess that the famous temple is more attractive in the book than it is in reality. Its precincts, however, are remarkable for their beauty—a place of sweet waters and emerald vegetation, where, as usual, only man is vile, the individuals who squat about the sacred walls being in every way filthy.

We were accompanied thither by Mlle, Liechmann, whose father represented the United States at the Porte, and who was then engaged to Comte Louis de Gontaut-Biron. Later on, however, she married her compatriot, James Hyde.

A terrible thunderstorm broke before we were able to return to the yacht, and as my wife had excused herself from accompanying us to the green mosque on the pretext of indisposition, I was naturally torn with anxiety at the thought of her

being alone during this warfare of the elements, and I became nervously apprehensive for her safety.

My worst forebodings seemed about to be realized as, on arriving on the scene, we found that the yacht had dragged her anchor, and was helplessly drifting about in the storm-lashed waters!

It was impossible to leave my wife in such a predicament. A thousand happy memories usurped the place of those which usually beset me, and, chartering a steam-launch, we set out in the teeth of the gale at no matter what cost to ourselves.

After what seemed an eternity, we managed to get close enough to the yacht to effect a foothold on the rope-ladder, and without wasting a moment, I ran, wet and dishevelled, to assure Anna that I should never know happiness if I could not share a common danger with her.

Hardly able to speak for emotion, I flung open the door of Anna's stateroom, naturally expecting to find her in a condition of physical prostration and terror. But Jay Gould's daughter was made of sterner stuff. She was seated comfortably in an arm-chair, entirely oblivious of the storm and the uncertain balance of the boat. A vivid splash of scarlet velvet lay like a flame across her knees; on it were disposed strings of milky perfection—*Anna's world-renowned pearls.* Thus, whilst the lightning flashed, and the wind shrieked defiance at the sea, she was placidly polishing her pearls, and then dipping them in a bowl of sea-water, in order to enhance their lustre!

She was entirely indifferent to my anxiety on her behalf, and actually reproached me for displaying it!

In the previous autumn I had had a similar proof of her lack of understanding where I was concerned.

One day we were galloping along a sandy avenue in the forest of Rambouillet, when suddenly her mare fell and rolled

on the ground. I was in front but, hearing a noise, I turned round and saw my wife lying apparently unconscious. I jumped off my horse immediately and ran to her assistance. Happily Anna had only fainted, and I carried her to her carriage. The accident, fortunately, was not serious, and I only suffered from fright. Nevertheless, I was pale as death, my eyes constantly filled with tears, and I could not calm my anxiety.

Notwithstanding some bruises, Mme. de Castellane was able to dine downstairs and to read the numerous telegrams asking for news of her. One of them bore the signature of a lady whom Anna disliked. She opened it and, disregarding my emotion, she spoke to me in such a manner that her words had the effect of a cold shower-bath on me.

We soon exchanged the dust and disorder of Constantinople for the complete contrast afforded by Mount Athos and its collection of "orthodox" monasteries, where no one of the female sex—not even a hen—is allowed to enter. After a few *pourparlers* through a megaphone with the "St. Peter" of the Mountain, intending visitors of the male persuasion are hauled up to the monastery in an enormous basket. It is a weird experience.

The monks are a community of honest, well-meaning men, but they devote little time to their persons, an omission which, to say the least of it, makes their presence *felt.* During a visit one exists, so to speak, in the most concentrated odour of sanctity.

Mme. de Castellane did not altogether approve of my proposed inspection of this monastic heaven, which she believed to be quite another kind of paradise. However, seeing is believing, and the basket which bore us heavenwards constituted the best answer to her suspicions.

We then sailed towards Athens by the Straits of Euripus,

but our yacht struck on a sand-bank between the Isle of Negropont and the mainland. This obliged us to abandon her and, in order to be able to continue our route, we took a make-shift train on a railway-line which was not yet finished between Thebes and the capital of Greece. An open transport-car was hitched on to an engine, which stopped at the place where landaus had been ordered to take us to our destination.

Our suite was terribly frightened on that railway in the making! The maid honestly believed that her last hour had come, and wept unrestrainedly, but I was inclined to think that her bad nerves were chiefly attributable to the assiduities of which she was the object on the part of Louis de Gontaut's valet.

But the sheer joy of Athens amply repaid me for the many disillusions which I had experienced since leaving France—and with what breathless admiration and respect I looked at the Parthenon! The simple and wise conception of that monument seems to be the material expression of an equation of algebra, there is not a superfluous block of marble in its construction, and its beautiful columns, guiltless of interstices, are not united by cement or iron. They are sufficient unto themselves.

The Parthenon represents the triumph of logic, and how far is it removed from the imperfections of modern architects who have vainly endeavoured to copy it! Beautiful architecture possesses a purely reasoning quality of its own, and derives its perfection from exactitude in calculation as to the general effect. Seen by moonlight, the Parthenon did not affect me so powerfully; the beautiful colouring was killed by the hard white light, which lessened the impression of absolute beauty which I had received in the morning, although it did not affect the restless and sensuous happiness which is generally afforded by these silent symbols of antiquity.

In Athens I renewed my acquaintance with an old family friend, a Frenchwoman of our "world," who had recently lost her husband. Not unnaturally, I proffered certain expressions of sympathy, adding a few well-chosen words in praise of the departed. "He was so kind, so thoughtful, so noble-hearted," I said.

The bereaved lady listened in silence, but said never a word. Then she gave vent to this amazing remark:

"It is quite possible that my husband possessed all these good qualities, *but I never knew him like that!*"

When our yacht was afloat again, she was brought to the Piræus, where we embarked.

After having passed the Canal of Corinth, we called at Corfu to visit the villa of the unfortunate Empress Elizabeth, which is a fearful mixture of German and Pompeian styles.

On the other hand, Cattaro, in Dalmatia, is a wonderful harbour, enclosed in a kind of fjord, where one still finds the remnants of the time of Napoleon.

Landaus, harnessed with horses which were smaller than the peasants, who are a race of giant mountaineers, took us to Cettigné, the capital of Montenegro, which has vanished since the War. The Prince's palace seemed ridiculous in my eyes, and the natives, who hated the Turks, were already speaking madly of Francis Joseph.

Passing Raguse, we admired its oleanders and its small Gothic palaces, and at last we arrived at Venice.

Alas, after the classical perfection of Greece, Venice typified mere anarchy. The exteriors of the palaces which rise from the water are decorated only at the base and are then left as bare walls to the top—an entirely illogical scheme of construction. And past these highly ornate bases float cabbage-stalks, dead cats and other unconsidered trifles of domesticity. The pervading odour of the present and the past is a *mélange*

of sewage and fried potatoes, and the mosquitoes—the real Doges of Venice nowadays—exact a heavy toll from most new-comers.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, however, Venice, like evil, is essentially attractive. In the countries of the East one notices the architecture, the sculpture: in Venice, only colour. In Egypt and in Greece, religious sentiment is at the base of conceptions; in Venice, the Tintorettos, the Tiepolos and even Carpaccios are palace-decorators rather than mystics or thinkers.

Venice is not the City of Love it is popularly supposed to be. It is rather the home of intrigue, and those passing passions which affect tempestuous individuals like Lord Byron and George Sand. It is a place of masks, of swaying lanterns, of throbbing music and fever-filled nights, but Romeo and Juliet could never have loved here as they did in old Verona, in the perfume of a nightingale-pierced darkness, when every wind bore on its wings a store of secret essences from a thousand dreaming gardens.

This showy Bride of the Adriatic is a voluptuous creature who demands luxury and display as her prerogatives. Her gondolas should be gilded, her palaces filled to overflowing with splendour. Venice is the home of pageant, but to-day her banquet-halls are deserted, and her palaces are let for a mere song to a coterie to whom originality in bathing-costumes on the Lido signifies the breath of life. But another salient feature inseparable from Venice is her atmosphere, and this lovely veil covers a multitude of her more glaring sins. At times she seems actually to be composed of gold and rose-colour, and from the sea one gazes ever across translucent vistas of sapphire. Then, and then alone, one understands why she has inspired poets to sing of her and painters to immortalize her trailing clouds of glory.

Those who visit her think they are obliged to feel great sensations, specially those inspired by Guardi, Longhi and Ganaletto, but the equivocal alone dominates that jewel of the Adriatic.

We returned to France, physically well, mentally dissatisfied.

Hardly had I set foot in Paris than I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of the Abbé Mugnier, a little man with the fair hair of a child, but whose very glance is a gift from Heaven, and whose expressive eyes are wells of perfect faith. The Abbé never appears to be listening to anything that is going on, but he never misses a single word, and he likewise remembers all he hears. He is that *rara avis,* a society priest and a good man, and although he is to be met in every fashionable *salon,* he is likewise an influence and a mainstay in the various outposts of the Catholic faith.

The Abbé is never at a loss to find the most appropriate solution for a difficult situation, and when Eugène Lautier once saw fit to parade his religious beliefs before the Abbé, he added: "The only thing I *cannot* submit to is the necessity of forgiving those who have injured me."

"Don't let that trouble you," answered his inspired adviser. "After all, forgiveness comes at the end of the Lord's Prayer."

On another occasion, when the Abbé was a guest at an evening reception, there passed him a lady who, weighed down with years and much superfluous flesh, had essayed to lighten her burden by dispensing with as much of her corsage as fashion permitted. That year, fortunately, a strap and a wisp of tulle sufficed.

A thoughtless youth, who had likewise observed this moving mountain, turned to the Abbé and remarked hilariously: "Well, Monsieur l'Abbé, one does not feel like kissing her."

The Abbé calmly remarked to his young friend: "I fear that would be impossible—she is not *quite* old enough for a relic!"

CHAPTER XIX

DURING the period that I lived in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, I had every opportunity of making the acquaintance of many of my wife's compatriots. Each time I visited the New World, I was received with the most cordial affability, and when I came back to Europe I always contrived to return these courtesies and I thus entertained magnificently bejewelled ladies and men who were celebrated for their limitless wealth.

The American women seemed much the same as I had found them during my first visit to the United States: thinking only of gowns, jewels and millinery, without much inner knowledge, and, as of yore, passionately fond of pleasure. Their actions seemed always dominated by a constant need of distraction.

The more serious-minded, who had become Europeanized, retained that indefinable "newness" which is inseparable from the other side of the ocean, although I think they felt happier in Paris than in New York.

The overseas girl does not easily accept guidance. She enjoys almost complete freedom, she amuses herself exactly as she chooses, and she frequents restaurants with young men, ever in search of new sensations. Her manner with man is full of assurance; and her ignorance, not only in intellectual matters, but also in material things, renders her completely ludicrous.

Once married, she is a less tender mother than the Frenchwoman. The child is more of an obstacle to her than a source of happiness. Later she takes no heed of its moral development and thinks only of giving it a "good time"; if it be a girl,

it will probably resemble her and, if a boy, will be given every opportunity for going in for sports.

She displays little interest in her home, she is not capable of appreciating good food, and she lacks the refinement which so characterizes the Parisian hostess, who considers it discourteous to serve a bad dinner to her guests.

The American wife soon tires of her husband and indulges in passing emotions which do not display any *savoir faire*. She always visualizes divorce at the end of the adventure and relies on her affinity to settle the situation. She rarely personifies the guardian of the home. The few exceptions only serve to confirm this rule.

One is surprised at the facility with which American women play on the *naïveté* of men. Sensitive to compliments, they never forget the arts of their sex and the *rosserie* which they practise adds to their charm of attraction. They are, moreover, adepts at causing pain, an indispensable adjunct for all coquettes.

They are courageous horsewomen; they play tennis and golf passionately, solely with a desire to amuse themselves; they think of nothing else. To receive compliments from any kind of man, and to exhaust him mentally with questions punctuated by boisterous laughter, constitute their idea of having a good time.

One of these Saintes Nitouches who allowed me to think that I was the sole object of her thoughts gave me a good many rendezvous, but I discovered that she was only making use of me in order to atract the one person in whom she was really interested. I pretended to be her dupe and I succeeded in my object, whereas she was not so successful in hers, and in the end she became the victim of her own machinations.

American women wear at sixty the dresses and hats of girls of twenty.

The young girls thirst for freedom, full-grown women are crazy for every passing emotion; old ladies exist solely for society and dancing. A pampered Pekinese and a cocktail serve to complete their happiness.

The American boy is often a bad son, opposing his father, in whose footsteps he seldom seeks to follow, showing thereby the lack of comprehension inherent in his race. He prefers to develop his personality in his own way. When he himself becomes a parent, he takes little notice of his children, placing his sons at college and his daughters in expensive foreign schools. He does not care for society, simply because he has no conversational power. Inelegant in his person, he excels only in business.

In general, the American is not fond of women. Sometimes he makes a bargain with a woman who happens to please him, who arouses his emotions and who, above all, appeals to the interested side of his character. This, I think, explains why there is not much lasting love in the United States. On the other hand, one meets with many passing passions and an incalculable number of divorces.

A multimillionaire, however strong-minded he may be, is often extremely weak when tempted.

Descending from compromise to compromise, from the mistress of Buffalo Bill to her maid, and even lower still, a certain millionaire went so far as to marry them all in turn, each successive marriage being followed by a divorce, so that his children speak of "Mamma No. 2" and "Mamma No. 3."

The vanity of the American is full of *naïveté*. He may belittle the aristocracy, but he dearly loves a lord, and admires titles, honours and decorations because he has none in his own country.

I once invited one of the best-known personalities of Wall Street to a soirée. My guest spoke English with a very strongly

pronounced American accent and I was surprised to see on his coat a decoration with which no one present was familiar.

He was the object of general curiosity, and, always interested in the unusual, I asked him: "What is that dazzling order you are wearing?" He replied, in the most natural tone: "It is my own composition!"

If we have now no longer any distinct classes in Europe, at least one feels that, notwithstanding the present political equality, there was, at some bygone period, a strongly cemented hierarchy. Our former frames have perhaps lost their gilding, but there remain traces tenacious enough to prevent time from effacing them altogether. In New York, social compositions never having existed, there is no similar decomposition.

In Europe we possess our "style," our "period," like a piece of furniture, because we are attached to our antecedents by a definite past. Even deprived of her prerogatives, we retain an indelible stamp. The bourgeois and the working-man also remain what they were. The nobleman cannot rid himself of his atavistic instinct, and, seeking the company of his equals, by reason of the fragility of his caste, he still gives one the impression of being someone who counts, notwithstanding the fact that he may no longer possess fortune or political influence. Supple, weak, yet tenacious and resistant, like the ivy, he lives on the very entanglement which, in return, strangles him.

In the United States, thought does not depend upon social position, the individual does not belong to a determined class. Customs are created by the laws.

No outward sign distinguishes the multimillionaire from the man without a fortune, and as the latter is not labelled externally, one does not know to whom one is speaking. Everyone pursues the dollar and accepts life as he makes it.

Women, however, possess a special hallmark, *i.*, *e.*, the pearl

necklace, which is worn in the street, at the theatre, at balls or funerals. Its value places "Madame" among the "important" or "middling" or "small," and determines the wealth of her husband. Everyone in America says: "He is worth so much," an expression which sums up the entire American mentality.

The self-made man ascribes the merit of his success solely to himself, and thereby provokes the admiration or jealousy of his fellow-citizens. He might say, parodying the words of Descartes: "I spend, therefore I am."

Bankruptcies are mere accidents. The creditors lose their money and do not worry, as they invariably make good by increasing their profits in other operations.

"At last we are bankrupt!" is a current joke in the States.

The "Great Spirit" whom the Red Indians adored has no longer temples and worshippers on the continent over which he held sway for centuries, and modern Americans are probably haunted by the prehistoric civilization of which Plato speaks in the "Timæus" and the "Critias."

The vivid descriptions which the Greek philosopher gives of the gigantic works achieved by the Atlanteans, masters of the sea ten thousand years before the Christian era, came back to my memory during my stay in New York.

The aspect of this unique city reminds one of that titanic Atlantis so often recalled in the dreams of my childhood. I find again the same eager desire for the gigantic, the same taste for show and the same boldness in practical effort, and if Americans were to be frank with themselves, they would prefer the superman to the more proportionate man. Possibly this craving for bigness is an effect of atavism, for it appears that the Atlanteans were in reality the giants of the ancient cycle, and that the Yankees who came over from Europe to colonize

this reconquered world now participate in the qualities and the faults of the race which the Bible denominates the "Ghiborim" and the Greeks the "Titans."

Theirs is still the state of chaos, and their strength is always excessive.

Their buildings bear witness to this deficient sense of proportion. The principal specimen of architecture in New York is that of a railway station, an enormus terrestrial landing-place, just as the enormus cavern of the Atlanteans was a maritime landing-place.

With my antiquated mentality, I should endeavour to conceal such a building. There is no reason for attaching greater importance to a railway station than to an engine, a bicycle or a telephone. Nothing is less ideal than a shed in which one cannot live, a starting-place and a place of arrival full of smoke, usually inconvenient and chilly, from which the soul is for ever exiled and the body gladly departs.

Flanked by machine-cut columns, these buildings bear formless roofings destined to cover smoke. . . .

What an anomaly to see in an avenue which has no name but only a number, in a country which is likewise nameless; being styled merely "The United States," *the palace* of Cornelius Vanderbilt, copied from a château built at Blois by French sovereigns, who were not even aware of the existence of America!

As to the luxurious marble mansions of Newport, they are surrounded only by a few metres of ground containing the farm, the stables, the laundry, the glass houses—in a word, all that constitutes the requirements of life is relegated to nondescript shanties. One vegetable garden supplies vegetables for all the cooks in a block of houses; so that everyone eats beans or potatoes on the same day. One garage likewise shelters all

the automobiles, etc., etc. This idea appears eminently "practical" in American eyes.

The villas, like enormous pantomime heads, serve as advertisements, in much the same way as the posters of Cadum Soap or Quinquina Dubonnet.

Whenever I was invited to those palaces or villas, I noticed with stupefaction that the master of the house was not at all inconvenienced by the knowledge that his contemporaries and friends only came to see him for the sake of his pictures or his tapestries.

Certain rich Americans adorn themselves with their furniture, thinking that thus they present some special interest because chance has given them the faculty of signing their names to a big cheque.

When luxury failed me, I did not lose my individuality. When an American loses his palace and his furniture, he becomes a nonentity.

In Europe our parents possess, according to their position in life, castles, houses or cottages which they have inherited. They are born there, so are we; they will be buried there, and we shall rest beside them. The ivy which covers them is like claws still clinging to the habitation of the earth. There is no sacrifice too great for us to make in order to retain these homes in our hands, because they form part of the family, and represent tombs of past and future generations.

The home is as precious to a European as the Lares were to the Romans.

The American, who is less attached to the soil, does not feel the link between the past and the present. Before possessing a home, he seeks to make his fortune anywhere and in any way. If he becomes rich, he chooses a residence which will satisfy

his immediate needs, without thinking about the place wherein his parents dwelt.

His children will probably sell that house if they do not like it; it is all the same to him: "After us, the deluge!"

Possessing no ancestors, the American does not think of his heirs, for he knows that progress will probably make his son the creator of his own environment.

Time does not enter into his conceptions as a vital element. He calculates nothing with relation to an eternal country; he concentrates everything into his own intense life.

A native of San Francisco will leave his city without a regret to settle down in Washington, and he will change his profession if he finds a more lucrative one.

The American's manner of seeing things has something fragmentary which makes it differ essentially from ours, as the mind of the Frenchman is subordinate to the centre which his parents have evolved.

A Provençal could not live in Brittany, any more than would an olive-tree; an Alsatian in Languedoc, any more than would a fir-tree in the North. He will be either a cultivator or a workman, because his father was either the one or the other before him. The country dictates his trade, his reason for existing, his creed. Wherever the chances of life send him, he still carries in his heart, in his head, in his arms, that national capital, human and moral, which constitutes him the protector of his personality.

In France, on All Souls' Day, the churches are full of believers. He whom circumstances have caused to dwell far away returns to his home to pray at the grave of his parents and to show the emotion which pervades him on that sacred date, when he can freely meditate on those principles of constancy and bravery from which he draws his patriotism and his courage on the battlefield.

Between the living and the dead there is, according to the expression of Gustel de Coulanges, "only the distance which separates the home from the tomb."

The Dead! . . . In their remembrance are found the most noble thoughts and the deepest sentiments which incite us to the greatest things, and this spirit will continue, to follow us in the other world, and will guide our children after us.

I shall always remember the outlook of a well-known American lady who, an Englishwoman by marriage, had lost her parents and children. This lady had kindly invited me to a ball in Paris, on November 2nd, a day, as most people know, which is set apart for the dead in all Catholic countries.

I remarked to my friend that she would find very few people who would be inclined to dance on that day. "But . . . why in the world not?" she asked in great surprise. I at once explained to her the religious customs of our country.

My would-be hostess became thoughtful, and after having reflected for a few moments, she observed with a yawn:

"Heavens! How tiresome you are in France with all your dead!"

CHAPTER XX

ANNA had no reason to find fault with me touching the education of our sons. I loved my boys, and I endeavoured to bring them up on entirely independent lines as captains of their souls, but I insisted on a proper respect for tradition, art, morals, politics and religion. As a sincerely religious man, I founded their love for France on religion, and this "obsolete" principle was doubtless dubbed old-fashioned by more worldly-minded people.

Boni, George and Jay have emerged from the whirlpool of our troubled domesticity as the best types of gentlemen, and in their love I find ample compensation for my many sorrows. The two elder boys were brought up under the eye of their tutor, the Abbé Cagnac, but Jay was entrusted to a fat and kindly governess, and whenever we happened to be in Paris the good soul always drove in the Bois with the children in a special carriage, a seat in which, in addition to those occupied by the schoolroom party, was always reserved for their dog and a pet lamb. I often waited for them at the Pré Catalan, and we had an hour's romp together on the grass.

I nicknamed my eldest boy Pittipat, the second Tippytow, and the baby Tittymouse, and, notwithstanding the luxury by which they were surrounded, the children remained absolutely unspoilt! I often picture them as they returned from their daily walk. When an imposing footman had thrown open the doors of our palace and, wrapped in their ermine coats, the boys traversed the long marble galleries, they looked, for all the world, like little kings.

Every day Tittymouse, with his long fair curls falling over his shoulders, came into my bedroom to kiss me good morning and to light the wood-fire with tremendous solemnity. He was deeply offended whenever my valet kindled it before his arrival, and he would ask, in tones of deep disappointment: "Why can't I make a lovely fire for papa to-day?"

Tittymouse's joy in life at the present moment is to exceed the speed-limit, and his road record is one which occasionally makes me apprehensive for his safety. It is then that the picture of the child rises before my eyes, and I find it easy to wish that he were once more the Tittymouse of those far-off days.

I always suffered positive agonies of mind when any of our children were ill.

Shortly after my parting from Anna, my second son was taken ill with pneumonia, and his mother was sent for. We met by the bedside of our suffering child and, with a heart ravaged by poignant emotion, I ventured to appeal to Anna's better self. "Do not," I pleaded, "allow this innocent child to pass away with any bitterness in your heart where his father is concerned. At least take my hand in friendship, I implore you!"

Anna took my hand, but the next moment she reproached me with having said something detrimental about her, of which I was entirely guiltless, and I never saw her again.

Boni and George were clever and studious boys, who passed their examinations with honours, and at the respective ages of seventeen and eighteen they learned the great lessons of life and death in the World War. Faithful to the traditions of our house, they acquitted themselves gallantly, and both were decorated in recognition of their service to France.

Anonymous letters pursued me continually, and I received some disagreeable ones regarding the education I was giving

to my sons. Everything I did was matter for animosity. My luxury and the political ideas which I pronounced at the Chamber were attacked in some of these effusions. Jealousy is an essentially French sentiment, and I inspired it in the highest degree.

And yet I was far from being happy. A psychologist would have understood that I was deadening my anxieties by perpetual fêtes, and pleasures in order to hide from myself a catastrophe which I knew could not long be delayed.

Madame de Castellane's detestation of me became more and more apparent. People have said (this was an invention) that she found some very compromising letters in my safe. No such thing occurred. My safe was forced only after my departure from the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, and the letters which were published during my trial were none other than the outlines of those which I had written to her to try and bring her back to me. All the newspapers wilfully accentuated this error.

The real truth is that an imprudent lady took it into her head to send me, when I was at the General Council at Digne, a pretty significant but not highly compromising letter. It was intercepted and kept during six months by Kelley, my wife's lawyer. This permitted her to set a flock of detectives on my track, who had time to observe, without my knowing it, all my actions and movements.

It is impossible for me to give any adequate idea of the campaign instigated against me. I was encompassed by a host of detectives—they swarmed unseen in my palace, they waited in their cohorts outside, hoping to track my footsteps to some secret rendezvous.

Perfection is not of this world, and I do not pretend to have been better than anyone else; but I am convinced that I have not done anything worse than those who read my confessions.

AFTER THE DIVORCE

BY SEM

Poor Anna never stopped to realize the incontrovertible fact that I was not, as she well knew, either a Samson or a Hercules. I was enveloped in an invisible net, and the Gould agents never bothered their heads to differentiate between innocence and guilt. They were paid handsomely for their labours, and that was all that concerned them. My daily doings were reported every succeeding morning to my wife's lawyer, M. Cruppi, who, curiously enough, happened to represent one of my chief political opponents, and I have never been able to fathom the reasons which made this man, my associate in Parliament, defend an action the real nature of which he must have thoroughly understood.

Madame de Castellane greeted me every morning with a smile. To do her justice, I believe that she did not really know the whole extent of the secret-service activities, but only followed her instructions to the letter. Her attitude at this time was a curious mixture of regret at the prospect of losing me, and unalloyed relief that she would probably be able to give me my *congé* in the near future. But Anna very likely was never a free agent from the day she left me until the day when the laws of man freed her from a tie which death alone should be allowed to sever.

On December 8, 1905, we gave a dinner in honour of the King of Portugal. I was outwardly insouciant but my heart misgave me, as I sensed the impending disasters which were about to befall me. Once more the glittering world of Parisian society passed and repassed through the vast rooms; once more a wonderful orchestra delighted my soul with its harmonies.

I had arranged a sort of private *salon* on the first floor, where His Majesty King Carlos chatted with the crowd of pretty women by whom he was surrounded. The whole effect was fairy-like—flowers, perfume, music, beauty, all the accessories

of life were present, but the atmosphere was charged with electricity . . . the storm-clouds were already gathering overhead.

But although I was obsessed with a sense of coming trouble, I had not the slightest idea that our dinner was, in reality, a funeral feast, or that if I was sealed unto sorrow, nearly all those who were present were marked down for premature death!

The English Ambassador, Lord Bertie, is dead; his wife (also a guest) has passed away. The Marquis de Jaucourt and Comte Albert de Mun are no more; the Portuguese Minister, the Comte Souza-Rosa, the Marquis de Lau, Monsieur de Abarsouza and the Duc and Duchesse Fezenac have joined them in the shades—and the guest of the evening, King Carlos of Portugal, was assassinated! What a hecatomb of social celebrities!

And now the tongues of rumour wagged unceasingly in the clubs and *salons,* and people ceased talking whenever I came into a room . . . but still nobody dared come out in the open and tell me what all the world knew was in store for me!

On Twelfth Night, Anna and I dined with the Comtesse Robert Fitzjames at her pretty flat in the Rue Constantin, and during dinner someone asked me what I had been doing with myself all day.

"Oh, I've been to the *Chambre,*" I replied, and then, to my stupefied horror, I heard my wife saying coldly:

"I don't think Boni has been to the *Chambre.* The word has two meanings, and I think he prefers a *Chambre* as a bedroom to a place of legislation." Everyone looked at her in astonishment; she was as a rule most circumspect in her conversation. But the incident was forgotten in the festivities which followed.

It fell to my lot to draw the "bean," and, following the traditions of Twelfth Night, I toasted the guests in champagne

with the old formula: "The King drinks." And, as I surveyed my subjects of a night, I heard a woman remark in a stage whisper: "King to-day—dethroned to-morrow!"

The 26th of January may be said to have represented my Ides of March, whereon my star, which had once blazed cometwise across the social sky, came in contact with all the other stars which in their courses fought against me!

At about three o'clock my wife and I walked in the Bois together. It was a bright frosty afternoon, and we chatted in the most friendly fashion. When we parted, I expected to meet Anna again at dinner, but on my return from the Palais Bourbon a little after six, I found my house desolate. . . . My wife, my children and my servants all had vanished into thin air.

The whole place was in darkness, for Anna had cut off the supply of electricity at the main! I groped my way blindly in the gloom, until I suddenly perceived a tiny spark of light shining like a beacon of hope from an open door at the end of a passage. I followed in the direction whence the kindly light proceeded, and to my intense relief I discovered the Abbè Cagnac sitting in his study, which was illuminated by a solitary candle. The good priest looked at me with immense pity, but he signed the death warrant of Hope in four fatal words: *"She will never return."*

Distracted, hardly conscious of what I did, I rushed to the Hotel Bristol, there to be received like a criminal by the manager and several plain-clothes detectives, who prevented me from communicating with any member of my family. There was nothing for it but to return to the Avenue du Bois, there to be welcomed by the sight of an official application on behalf of Madame de Castellane for a judicial separation.

My first action (when once I had grasped the full meaning of this ominous document) was to quit the palace which had

been bought and paid for with Gould money, and leave Anna in undisturbed possession. But I was wrongly advised, as by so doing I contributed to my own undoing, and my consideration for my wife's feelings was construed by her advisers as desertion!

Acting, however, on this purely unselfish impulse, I passed a restless night at the Hôtel Laperouse . . . but "restless" is a faint word to describe it. I was pursued by all the Furies, and I wondered to which particular Fury I was destined to fall a victim. I determined, however, not to acquaint my father and mother with the catastrophe, hoping against hope that Anna would return home on the morrow.

Needless to say, she never returned; but when I saw her sometime afterwards in the presence of President Ditte, I asked her why she had elected to be so charming to me on the day she left home.

She was silent. She surveyed me coldly. *"Because it was for the last time,"* she replied.

And as the barbed arrow of Destiny penetrated my soul, I realized that this answer signified the end of all things for me.

My matrimonial debacle was the talk not only of Paris, but of the provinces; and one afternoon, when I was returning from Rouen, two gentlemen in my compartment (who were naturally unaware of my identity) discussed me and my adventures with evident enjoyment, and I learnt many things about myself which were really intriguing and enlightening.

It was said that I had bought two rows of pearls, one of which had been delivered at Madame de Castellane's, and the other given by me to an actress, and that the great fact had been discovered when the bill was presented.

I also learnt that I had spent fifty millions on works of art; that I was half mad, that I had ill-treated my wife, and that I managed her fortune recklessly. At one of my shooting-

parties, I now heard, the beaters had gone on strike over a question of money, and at the end of the hunt bailiffs had come to seize the game. At Biarritz, continued these gossips, Madame de Castellane had noticed on a *demi-mondaine* a jewel which had belonged to her. I was credited with having received enormous commissions on all my purchases, and it was insisted that this was the reason for the bad feeling shown to me by the Gould family.

I heard yet another amusing story. It was said of me that, having met on the Boulevard de Courcelles (for they were very accurate as to details) a young Japanese girl, I had followed her home. The girl knew me, it seems, by name and by sight, but I knew nothing about her. She was said to have maintained her incognito until the moment of my divorce, when she acknowledged her crime to Madame de Castellane without thinking of the consequences.

One of the speakers actually called me a spendthrift; his friend dubbed me a roué, and added that I possessed no less than seven or eight "homes away from home" where I spent many unrecorded hours. But what appeared to excite the greatest interest in the minds of these gossips was the alleged discovery of a pocket-book in which my particular friends were classed in alphabetical order, and they quoted with fearful joy the large number of cream cakes and cups of China tea which were also entered in this little memorandum book!

I listened to all these tales without raising an eyebrow. I was astonished to find that I interested the public to such an extent.

Two months had now elapsed since I had left the Avenue du Bois, and all attempts at a reconciliation—notably those of the Queen of Naples and the Duchesse de Vendôme—had proved unavailing. Realizing this, the combative spirit awoke within my breast, my hitherto obscured star again inspired me,

and I determined to make a renewed fight against unhappiness and tremendous financial odds.

During our married life I had advanced Anna from time to time various large sums of money, which had come to me as legacies from my grandparents. I took it for granted that she would return these, but she never repaid me any of my advances, and I was now given to understand that she considered it her right to retain them as *reparations*, or, as *she* put it, as money expended in house-repairs.

I thus found myself, after eleven years of a wealthy existence, thrown penniless on the mercy of a mocking, hostile Paris, and I experienced the truth of the saying that the laughter of Paris is the most cruel in the world.

One day, as I was going into a certain *salon*, I came face to face with a lady whom I had once admired. I knew she had quite forgotten any kindnesses on my part, and I also knew that she had spoken freely to my detriment, so I smiled into her pretty, over-rouged face and murmured: "*Passez, beauté, passez,*" giving the word the entirely opposite and uncomplimentary meaning of "*passée.*"

But my former friend was equal to the occasion.

"Not so *passée* as your reputation, *mon cher*," said she.

I held my head higher than ever: I went everywhere, I never discussed my misfortunes, I still used an automobile, I still lunched, dined and wined my friends. In fact, I put into practice Montesquiou's famous aphorism: "It is bad enough to have no money, but it would be much worse if one had to deprive oneself of the comforts of life into the bargain."

But at once I was seized with a distaste for my world, and instead of taking the direction of the Avenue du Bois, I sought refuge in the Luxembourg Gardens, where the inartistic statues of the Queens of France seem petrified with horror at the indignity of their surroundings. There I watched those simple

souls who like to feed the pigeons, and I smiled at Mimi Pinson and her student lover, and perhaps—who knows?—envied them!

One morning an old woman, pushing a barrow, passed close to where I was sitting. "Chickweed and groundsel for the birds! Chickweed and groundsel!" she cried at intervals, in her quavering voice, and when I realized what a struggle life meant to this feeble creature, I remembered that, after all, I had much left me for which to be thankful.

My first step was to pay my debts, as I felt that the day on which I should not owe a penny to anyone would be the happiest in my life!

It was an illusion, for the day when I shall not owe anything to anyone any more will be the most embarrassing one for me. I shall not know what to do!

I met Fanny Read from time to time in society, and I once heard her singing the song of those bygone spring days when I first met Anna Gould. "Oh, night of Hymen, oh, sweet night of love!" What an irony it now represented!

Fanny Read played the double rôle of Anna's guardian angel and the chivalrous protector of an ill-treated woman, and it appeared that she had constituted herself counsel-in-chief for the prosecution!

At all events, Anna's kinder feelings towards me completely disappeared, and at last she manifested such an antipathy to her married name that when leaving her card on the wife of the Minister of Belgium, Mme. Le Chait, the card bore simply the name of "Madame Gould," although she had not yet the right to it.

But I was still desirous of making a final attempt to readjust the wreckage of our lives, so I wrote to my wife and opened my heart to her. I was wholly sincere in so doing, and I presented my case in what I considered a simple and direct man-

ner. As a result of my pleading, Anna consented to meet me at the house of my sister-in-law, Comtesse Stanislas de Castellane. But she failed to keep her promise, although I feel sure that if she had obeyed the dictates of her heart, instead of the dictates of her lawyers, matters would have been arranged happily between us! That she was not unfavourably disposed to consider a reconciliation, is proved by her remark to President Ditte: "I want time to think." But other people have thought for Anna since the day she was born, although her colossal obstinacy is often mistaken for great strength of character.

By Anna's express wish, and in order to afford her "time to think," her action was postponed for two months, but this respite was most prejudicial to my defence, as the Goulds, alarmed by Anna's vacillation, mustered their reserve forces and blackened my character still further, with the result that Anna ultimately voted for—not separation, but a divorce!

Anna sent back all my personal effects, so far as my wardrobe went, but she did not include my jewellery or presents from mutual friends.

A divorce, however, was somewhat difficult to obtain, as my misdemeanours were not flagrant.

If the methods of the lawyers were not above suspicion, President Ditte, and his colleague, President Forrichon, did not hesitate to show their disapproval of the proceedings, and they refused to give the verdict, on the pretext of ill health, and left it to the care of their representatives to pronounce the decree of divorce.

My wife and I were now free to work out our own salvation, and I am proud to say that I have risen, like the Phœnix, from the ashes of my past. I do not hold myself blameless: in many respects I am sure that I failed to make my wife happy, but my failings were those of youthful arrogance, and not the wilful cruelties of more mature years.

Neither Anna Gould nor myself reckoned with the serious difference between our nationalities and our upbringing—at that time more serious obstacles than they are to-day—and I am sure that we did not appreciate the wisdom of giving and taking during our married strife. There is no doubt that the sudden possession of great wealth awoke in me the prodigality inseparable from most of the old nobility, whilst in Anna it only seemed to develop the economic Scotch instincts.

I shall perhaps take the public into my confidence at a later date, and describe my strenuous life after my divorce, and my bitter persecution by the Prince de Sagan. I shall relate my efforts to earn money, and my picturesque start in business, whilst, notwithstanding privations and persecutions, I still entertained diplomacy and society. And finally I shall show that I can claim to apply unto myself the historic motto: *"J'y suis, j'y reste!"*

I have accepted my destiny in a philosophic spirit and, by dint of wearing armour next to my heart, I am proof against all onslaughts whatsoever of nerve-shattering emotions.

When I married Anna Gould, I laid the world and its possibilities at her feet. When she divorced me, she kicked them inconsequently away!

I was a considerate husband, as I had a great feeling and admiration for my wife, but I had one fault: that of showing her the confidence of a person who was not of her nationality.

And thus in reviewing my varied experiences, I cannot do better than terminate my confessions in the words of Macbeth:

> "Life's but . . . a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing."

THE END

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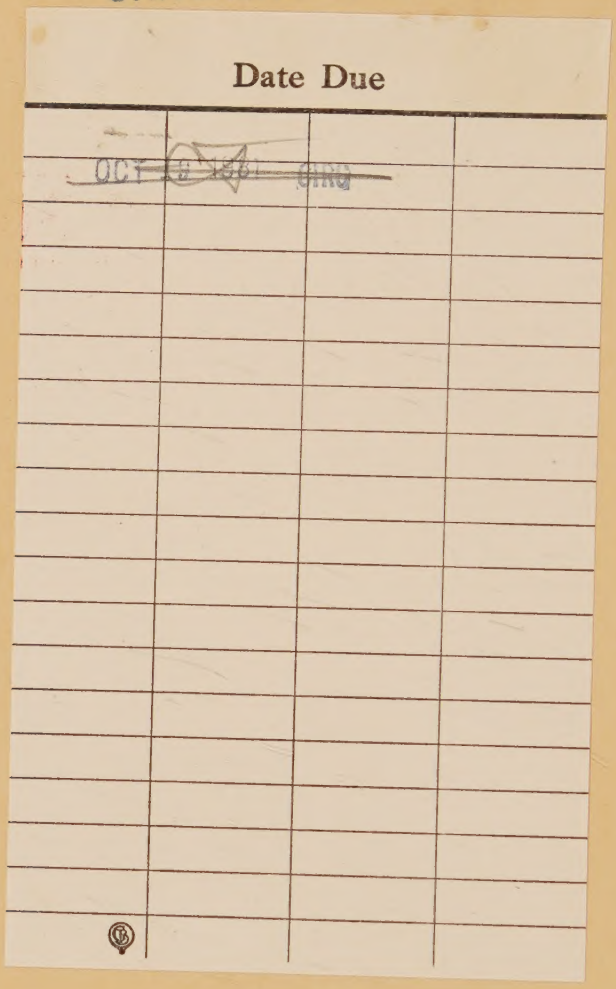

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